About Buying a Horse

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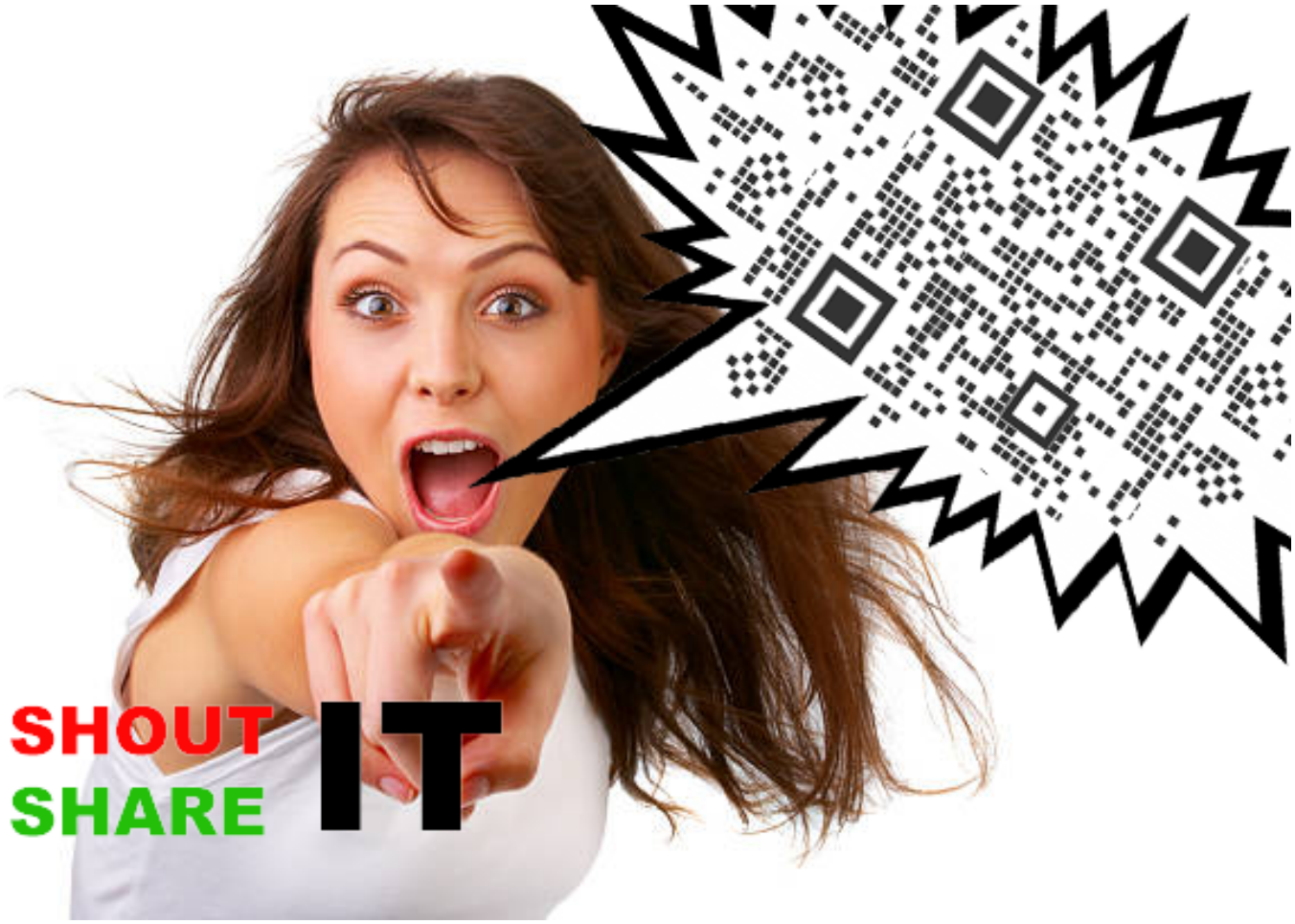
By F. C. Burnand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About Buying a Horse

OCCASIONAL HAPPY THOUGHTS.—I.

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HAPPY THOUGHT—

To dedicate this Volume, containing some account of "The Horse and Stamps," to my Friend

JAMES D. DAVISON, Esq.,

whose Notes on Notes are of wide-world circulation, and who did me the honour to be much interested in my search after a Horse.

RAMSGATE, 1875.

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ABOUT BUYING A HORSE.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT THE PURCHASE OF A HORSE.

OW my pony is getting old. Not strong enough to take a party of six fourteen miles without what they call "showing signs of distress." Tell every one, for months, that I must get a horse. Or say "Cob." Cob sounds more modest: more like a person who keeps only *one*. "Horse" sounds like getting a Derby winner. Also, for another reason, if I say at a large dinner party "I must get a new horse," it gives the idea of my having a stud, consisting of a lot of old ones, and that I am going to "add to their number," as they say on Committees.

I consult my friend Gloppin on the subject. I generally consult him on any matters connected with horseflesh, on account of his sporting reputation, which he first gained

through the cut of his trousers. In fact, it was this peculiar cut that originally gave him the idea of riding, as, up to the age of twenty-two, he had never crossed a horse. But, happening one day to change his tailor, and being fitted by his new one with this remarkable sportingly cut pair of trousers, and, further, being congratulated by every one on their admirable fit, it occurred to him that he had better be consistent from the sole of his boots to the top of his hat, and so, when he next appeared in public, he was sporting all over. He was away for some time—at least, his friends lost sight of him,—and, when I saw him again, it was out with the hounds, about sixteen miles from my cottage, when I had driven over in order to see the throw-off.

Happy Thought.—The pleasantest way of seeing a "throw-off" is to be seated, comfortably, in a trap, drawn by a horse that *won't start at anything*. How one can *then* remark on the want of pluck shown by the riders, and what an exciting spectacle it is to see them take the first fence! One enjoys it, too, all the more if you've had the slightest experience of taking the first fence yourself. I have. Then the fun of crying out "Yoicks!" "Tallyho!" and "Gone away!" from a seat in a carriage. Then the jokes which you can safely make to a nervous rider (always from your seat in the carriage, when he comes up to say "Good morning;" for instance), about the "throw-off." One can say, "I've come to see the hounds throw-off. *Your* horse looks as if it was going to throw-off first." Or something light and airy to that effect. Then you can inquire of some one else "How he

feels outside a horse?" and ask another person, with a fresh horse, just to "pop over that hedge and let's see how he goes."

On the whole, the longer I look back on my past experience, and the more I consider the matter, the more firmly am I convinced that the pleasantest way of going out hunting is in a carriage, with plenty of rugs, a flask and cigars, and, if you follow the hounds by road, a hamper with luncheon.

"I know what you want," Gloppin says. This, on consideration, is clever of Gloppin, after I've told him what I want. But it's Gloppin's characteristic; he always knows "to a hair" what anyone wants, if they only tell him beforehand. "I know what you want," says Gloppin, quite angrily, as if I had put my case weakly or described my requirements inadequately; "you want a good stout cob——"

"Yes," I say, "about fourteen one."

"Well," replies Gloppin eyeing me over, doubtfully, "about fourteen one or two; something that would take you a distance when you wanted to drive, and that you could just throw your leg over, when you merely wanted an hour's jog along the road. You wouldn't object," he adds, slyly, "to getting a day's hunting out of him occasionally."

In the presence of my Aunt and company, to whom Gloppin is an oracle, I admit, with a smile intended to be quite as knowing as Gloppin's, that I should *not* object to a day's hunting out of him.

"Lor!" says Gloppin, looking round at the guests and fixing my Aunt, "I know the sort of horse he wants."

I, too, look round with an air of satisfaction, as much as to say to those who didn't know it before, "I'm a bit of a sportsman; I can drive, I can ride, and I'm—keep your eye on me—I'm going to do quite the Country-Squire-like sort of thing—I'm going to buy a horse. You'll hear Gloppin mention the sort of thing, and you'll hear me close with him."

I am silent, regarding Gloppin expectantly. The guests too are listening to what he's going to say next.

He examines me critically, as if he were going to, subsequently, paint a portrait of me, from memory, half-length, the remainder being cut off by the dinner-table, or write an article on my personal appearance, and then he remarks, "Hm! Yes—he must be up to weight."

"Well," I demur, pleasantly, for I feel we are getting on a delicate subject, only sporting men are so fond of expressing themselves roughly, and with unnecessary bluntness even before ladies, "Well, of course, I couldn't ride a mere pony."

The youngest Miss Wheeble, whom I have taken in to dinner, and with whom I have been keeping up a gay conversation about parties, dresses, yachting, military balls, cricket-matches, pôlo, tent-pegging, and pic-nics (all these subjects under a great mental strain, being entirely foreign to my usual serious line of thought connected with my seventh volume of *Typical Developments*), smiles, and observes that, of course I couldn't get any hunting on a pony.

Happy Thought.—Good excuse, though, for not hunting. Not a bad idea to keep a pony, and be always regretting he

isn't a hunter. Get credit for being able to go over a seven-barred gate, because no one has ever seen you do anything to prove you couldn't. Think it out.

"Ah!" says Gloppin, not paying any attention to these remarks (another peculiarity of Gloppin's, and of sporting men, who like to ride rough-shod over you), "you ride about fifteen stun, I suppose?"

He speaks of me as if I were a sack of coals. Only that's "ton" not "stun." [*Note.*—Arrange this for a *bon-mot* of D'Orsay's—make him say that he'd invite a coalheaver to dinner because he was a man of *ton*. Think this well out.] I knew he was coming to a delicate subject. He might just as well have kept this till afterwards.

Happy Thought.—Deny my weight. I *don't* ride what he calls "fifteen stun." By the way, is a stun a stone, or isn't stun something to do with wine measure?

Safest, when uncertain about a sporting word or its meaning, to pronounce it as *he* does. It strikes me, as a note for Vol. XV., letter E, on Equestrianism, suddenly, how ignorant one is upon most matters of weight. How much is a *stun?* Is it twenty hundred-weight or not? *Not*, I should say, because fifteen times twenty would be three hundred, and I can't weigh three hundred hundred-weight. Let me recall, while Gloppin is measuring me with his eye to discover exactly what I *do* weigh, let me recall my Tables. [Hamlet *passim*, "my tables!" "Four quarters make a hundred-weight." What quarters? What measure is this? Riding measure? . . . Make another note to look all this out,

and have marginal references to article on Equestrianism. [N.B.—At dinner I make notes under the table, or in shorthand—my own shorthand—on my wristband; as lazy boys used to take in dates for an examination and get found out.]

"Why," says Gloppin, "I ride thirteen stun, and you must weigh quite two stun more than I do."

"O, no," I say confidently.

"I'll lay you a fiver you're nearer fifteen stun than thirteen," he returns, sharply.

This is another sporting way of his of riding rough-shod over you. He knows I won't bet, and, because I don't take his wager, everybody present thinks he *must* be right and I *must* be wrong.

"What do you walk?" he asks, inquisitorially.

I don't know, and I haven't been weighed for two years. I haven't, because I object to the process. I shouldn't so much if it could be done quietly, and no one except yourself, be a bit the wiser. But a weighing-machine is generally in some conspicuous part of some public building, and if you pay your penny and sit down, lots of people come round you, and make remarks as to what they think you are, and then there's great excitement when the weighing machinist gives out your ticket and announces your weight.

I also object to it on another ground besides that of publicity, and it is that I don't believe the machines are correct. I don't think they give a correct return any more than any Income-tax payer does. No weighing-machine that I've tried has ever satisfied *me*.

I reply that when I was last weighed I think I was about

twelve stone. I don't commit myself to this statement; I only *think* it. *Au fond*, I have a sort of idea that I was twelve stone something, which something was so much that it just grazed thirteen stone. This portion of the history I do not tell.

Gloppin is incredulous. "Ah," he exclaims, nodding his head in confirmation of his own bigoted opinion, "if you don't ride all fifteen, I don't know what riding fifteen is."

Happy Thought.—Drop the subject, or rather this part of it. That is, drop *me*, and take up the horse. Set down one, and carry one.

"Do you know of anything to suit me, eh?" I ask him.

"Ah!" he replies; "it's a precious difficult thing to get. I don't know," he says, turning to my Aunt, "if there's a more difficult thing to lay your hand on just at this moment than what he" (with a nod at me) "wants."

"Indeed!" says my Aunt.

We are all interested. Myself especially. Evidently I want a very superior style of animal, and I draw myself up and listen with an air of some consequence.

"Yes," says Gloppin, "any dealer, or any one who knows anything about horses, will tell you"—this puts us all out of the question, as *we* haven't told him—"that the most difficult thing to get just now is what he wants, that's what they call a thorough old gentleman's Cob."

No, hang it! no. I protest against this description. If he had said a prancing Arab, or cream-coloured Persian steed, or something showy, or even a "covert hack" (which

sounds sporting), I shouldn't have minded. But to put me down as something so portly that I can only be suited by the sort of horse a heavy Archdeacon would jog about on, is too bad of Gloppin—in company—and I believe he does it on purpose.

Happy Thought.—Laugh the suggestion out of court. Treat it as Gloppin's joke. If my attempt is successful, every one will think it *was* Gloppin's joke, and a very stupid one.

"No," Gloppin insists, evidently rather annoyed at his suggestion being pooh-poohed, "that *is* what you want, an old gentleman's Cob, perfectly safe and sound. But," he adds, "it's a precious difficult thing to get."

I thought he knew of one. No, he doesn't, he "wishes he did; worth any money just now." Gloppin promises to be on the look out, and to let me know of anything likely. A relation of his, he says, had the very thing—"*the* very thing," he repeats, emphatically, and then stops, as if debating within himself whether his relation couldn't somehow be got rid of, or the animal stolen, as it were, from under him. The expression of Gloppin's face just now, does not suggest the idea of obtaining his relative's horse by any fair means.

"Won't he part with it?" I ask, presently, with the air of a millionnaire, to whom money was no object.

"Part with it!" returns Gloppin. "He sold it last week."

Happy Thought.—Clumber, the livery stable-keeper, from whom we have our flys, may know of something or have something. Will see Clumber to-morrow.

Before Gloppin leaves us, I impart to him my ideal of the horse I want. Fourteen hands high, to go in my pony trap, perfectly quiet to ride or drive, good-looking, if not handsome, bay preferred with four black legs, must not be afraid of trains, musn't shy, kick, or rear, be quite good-tempered, no vice, in fact all virtue, age rising six—by which *I* mean (whatever the expression itself may mean) between six and seven years old, price not more than forty guineas.

"Ah," says Gloppin sarcastically, "you'd like one given you."

I should. One *was* given me once. I shall never forget him. He wouldn't stand still, he wouldn't be ridden, he wouldn't be driven, he never kept the same pace for two consecutive minutes, he tossed his head up and down as if he were throwing up a ball and catching it again, and after ten minutes of the most utter discomfort, I handed him over to the stableman, dismounted with the greatest possible delight at finding myself once more on my own legs (which, I am inclined to think are, after all, the safest and least expensive means of conveyance), and the next day I sold him at the hammer for what I could get.

Happy Thought.—As I got him for nothing, I record this instance of having made money by the sale of a horse. Rare.

This is a long time ago, and I flatter myself I know more about what I do really want now, so to-morrow see Clumber the Flyman. The Nursury Rhyme occurs to me—"Simple Simon met a Flyman"—it was Pieman, but the facility of the rhyme is ominous.

CHAPTER II.

STILL BENT ON THE PURCHASE OF A HORSE—PLANS.

OPPORTUNELY, the interim between this conversation with Gloppin and my interview with Clumber, the Flyman, I spend to the best advantage in obtaining information as to horses generally.

The reports about the prices of horses just now are something alarming.

A casual acquaintance in a train has something to say on the subject. This casual acquaintance I have long taken to be of a strongly sporting turn, for three reasons: firstly, because he lives, I believe, a long way out in the country; secondly, because, in the summer, he wears a white hat with a black band round it; and, thirdly, because I don't know his name, or his profession, or business, if any; but, in a general way, I suppose him to be "something in the City," and something, only much more so, in the country, where I can imagine him strolling through his stables with a cigar sticking out of one side of his mouth, his hat cocked on the other side of his head, to balance the cigar, and inspecting everything, from a break to a handful of oats, with the air of

a man who had been taken in once, but was never going to be "had alive" again.

At the same time, and on due consideration, I should not be extraordinarily astonished were he to turn out to be the Cashier of some Mercantile Firm, at work from nine till four regularly, with ten days' holiday in the summer.

Assuming him, however, to be of a sporting turn for the purposes of conversation——

Happy Thought.—By the way, to assume everyone to be something merely for the purposes of conversation. Must lead to discussion.

For example, assume a man to be a soldier; talk to him of the latest invention in breech-loaders (if you can—I can't), manœuvres, campaigns, the exemplary conduct of the Light Cavalry in Abyssinia (if you know anything about it—I don't), and so forth. He will join you satisfactorily for some time, then you can put such a test-question to him as would tend to elicit his opinion with regard to "the probable expense of a Messman's Kit?" or any such professionally-military-sounding inquiry. Should he really happen to be in the Army, then he will probably stick his glass in his eye, seem puzzled, and ask you "what the deuce you mean?" in which case, you can retire behind your trenches (I haven't the faintest notion what effect this would have on an enemy, but I've often met the phrase in print, and like it), and pleasantly beg to be pardoned if your "phraseology" (use this word) is incorrect; or say "technically incorrect," which *does* look as if you had some acquaintance with the

subject—and add that you yourself are not a military man.

Should he, however, have to excuse himself on the same score, you can take high ground (all part of metaphorical field operations with "trenches" and "high ground"), and observe that you had asked for information, under the impression that he was in the Army. This will flatter him, as a rule, and he may after this confide to you, with a smile, that he travels in the wool trade.

Happy Thought.—If so, look out for being fleeced. [N.B.—Arrange this *jeu de mot.* Put it down to Sydney Smith, or Sheridan, or Theodore Hook.]

This "assumption for purposes of conversation" would really be found a most entertaining pastime for *voyageurs.* You can be eccentric in your assumptions. Thus, meeting a gentleman in black, with an imitation Roman collar, high ecclesiastical coat, and so forth, you can ask him, "How's the dashing Ninety-fourth getting on?" and "where's he quartered now?" If this irritates him, be provided with *pince-nez;* pull them out, stick them on your nose, survey him from hat to heel, and apologise for short-sightedness.

Assume somebody you've never seen before in your life to be Lord Wunborough, for example, whom also you've never set eyes on. In the course of conversation on politics, say to him, with a knowing twinkle, but preserving a deferential tone, "Yet I think your Lordship voted on the opposite side last Session." He will blush, smile, feel half inclined to accept the title, but honesty will gain the victory over his

innate snobbism, and he will reply, most good-naturedly, "I think, Sir, you mistake me for some other gentleman." He will not add "I am not a Lord," because to do so would be to let himself down too suddenly from the pedestal where you had placed him. After this the conversation will flow easily, and you'll have made a friend of him for life. When he re-enters the bosom of his family, he'll say to his wife, "Fancy, Eliza, I was taken for Lord Wunborough to-day. Absurd, wasn't it?" His wife won't see anything absurd in it, and, on the whole, depend upon it that, in this case, you've put husband and wife in a good temper, and made a whole household happy for one evening.

Assume a Banker to be a distinguished Artist, and he'll be delighted. Assume an Artist to be a Queen's Council, and he'll be immensely pleased. Assume a gentleman at large to be the Secretary attached to some foreign legation, with a secret mission, and he'll be highly gratified. Assume that a literary man would have made a first-rate preacher, and that a philosophical writer would have made his fortune if he had only stuck to the violoncello, and you will increase the number of your friends everywhere.

On the strength of these assumptions, they will everywhere speak of you as a "deuced sharp chap," a man who "sees below the surface," one who can "read you up," and so forth. And why? Because you've struck the key-note of that general dissatisfaction which everyone feels, and which is the strongest reason for everyone so working in his "station of life," as to make the best of it.

[N.B.—The moral finish of the above paragraph is a

specimen of my style in *Typical Developments, Vol. VI., On Normal Causation Socially Considered*—and has not, of course, much to do with my going in search of a horse. Still, it occurred to me. Before now, I've been nearly two hours getting from Langham Church to Leicester Square, simply because people would button-hole me in Regent Street. And meeting my Casual Sporting Friend was an opportunity to put before the world my *Theory of Gratuitous Assumptions*, which was not to be lost. *Passons!*]

My Casual Acquaintance, the cause of the foregoing discursiveness, says, shaking his head,

"Ah! horses *are* a price now. Why, you can't *look* at one under eighty guineas."

"Of course, as a fact, I *have* looked at one for less, and, to take it literally, as merely meaning looking at a horse and nothing else, I have looked at one—at several—for nothing.

To be always "going to look at a horse" is, by the way, the most inexpensive way of getting a reputation for being "deuced well off."

"I went," says my Casual Acquaintance, fiercely, as if recalling the incident vividly to his own mind, and challenging anyone to contradict him, "I went to look at a mare at Chick's place, over the hill by Cooper's Gravel Pits, you know——"

I nod; so as to help him on: but I don't know. However, such names as "Chick's place" and "Cooper's Gravel Pits" have a country-gentleman sort of ring about them,

which, in a carriage full of people, I would rather accept as matters of course than as entire novelties taking me by surprise.

My Casual Acquaintance being satisfied, or appearing to be so, continues, "Well, when I got up to Chick's, Old William there—you recollect Old William?"—I look puzzled, feeling it won't do for me to recollect every one and everything with the same readiness that I did "Chick's," and the "Gravel Pits,"—but he goes on to explain, rather impatiently, that he means,

"Old William, who used to be at the Kennels——"

Happy Thought.—O, yes; of course. The Kennels.

[It's no use, after acknowledging "Chick's," &c., at first, to stick at trifles, but I haven't a notion of what he's alluding to. It suddenly strikes me that perhaps *he* is proceeding on a theory of Gratuitous Assumptions, and that, as it were, he's playing at "taking me for somebody else." Be cautious what I admit.]

He goes on, "I thought you'd recollect him," meaning Old William, but I make no sign, being unwilling to go any further into the mire. "Well, Old William told me he'd got something that 'ud suit me down to the ground. It was nice enough, and I shouldn't ha' minded offering fifty for the mare. But, Lor bless you! what figure do you think they put her at?"

I don't know. Eighty, I suggest, that being my idea of a maximum price.

"Ah!" he rejoins, smiling ironically, "try twice eighty,

and you'll be nearer the mark. Two hundred guineas, Sir, they want for that animal."

I am incredulous.

"It's a fact," he says, getting out, having to change carriages; "and if you're going in for horseflesh now-a-days, by Jove! you'll have to pay for it. Good day."

Happy Thought.—Better not "go in for horseflesh."

But my Casual Acquaintance must be mistaken. By the way, I'll find out who he is. If he isn't a sporting man at all, what on Earth should he know about it? By this time there's no one to ask. He always carries, I notice, a hand-bag. If I might look into his hand-bag, I might find out who he is. He can't be a bag-man, because he's invariably first-class.

Happy Thought.—He's evidently a Hand-bag-man, which, of course makes all the difference.

After this I meet five persons, each within a quarter of an hour of the other, who all, being consulted by me upon this engrossing subject, put on an air of extreme vexation, and express their wish that they'd only known it three weeks or even a fortnight ago, when, it appears, several people living in remote districts were so anxious to get rid of horses (always exactly the sort I wanted, of course) that they'd rather have given them away than been obliged to keep them.

"And now——?" I asked, hoping against hope.

"Ah! *now!*" they all said, and shook their heads, as if these opportunities were lost for ever—as, indeed, they were.

I could almost have said to them, "Why on Earth didn't you write to *me*, and tell me that horses were going for nothing?" But, of course, the evident reply would have been, "Well, how the dickens could we tell you wanted such a thing?"

"But," again I feel inclined to say, "My dear fellows, when there are such good things going begging, why not *always* buy them for *me?*"

Happy Thought.—I *do* say this to two friends. One is going to Devonshire, the other to Norfolk. The latter says he often sees the sort of thing I want for twenty pounds.

"Do you?" I exclaim, and grasp his hand warmly. "Then, look here, when you see one at that price don't wait to write, but snap him up—buy him for me. I can trust your judgment perfectly."

He accepts this *carte blanche* commission. He doesn't ask for the twenty pounds to take with him so as to be ready.

Happy Thought.—Better not mention this part of the subject. What's twenty pounds?

I look upon this as settled. Settled, that is, with Swopler, who's gone to Norfolk. And settled also with Tom Bowman, who says that, "when he's among the farmers in Devonshire, he often sees just the thing I want, to be got for twenty-five or thirty, down on the nail."

Happy Thought.—Give him *carte blanche*, and let him catch a farmer on the nail.

In the meantime, I can be looking about on my own account.

Let me see, Gloppin, Swopler, and Tom Bowman, are all, so to speak, my agents, looking out for something that'll exactly suit me at a low figure. Pretty sure to get one out of the lot, and if there's anything nearer home, I shall hear from Clumber, the Flyman, when I call on him.

Happy Thought.—Much better to get it through Gloppin, Swopler, or any friend. No necessity to go to a horse-dealer then. Prejudice against dealers. Why? If I want a coat, I go to a dealer in coats; I don't get it through a friend. If I want a hat, I go to a dealer in hats. If I want a fish, I go to a dealer in fish—a fishmonger ["And would you were as honest a man."—SHAKSPEARE]. But, if I want a horse, the person we avoid is a dealer in horses. Why? Think it out.

CHAPTER III.

TO BOULOGNE AND BACK, ON BUSINESS, FOR A DAY OR TWO, WHILE KIND FRIENDS IN ENGLAND ARE LOOKING OUT FOR A HORSE FOR ME.

APPY Thought.—Here I am. On the quay. Low tide. What a peculiarly unpleasant smell! Friend who knows Boulogne says it's the drains.

Friend who knows Boulogne better than the other friend, says, "No, it isn't ; because Boulogne hasn't any drains."

First friend, Barnley, who has studied the subject, returns, warmly, that he begs pardon. No place has more drains than Boulogne.

Second friend, Chinton, inclined to be captious, observes, "Superficial drainage."

Barnley, unable to rebut the argument, admits, with regret, that the drainage *is* superficial.

Being interested in this (having come here to see about getting lodgings for my Aunt, who says that if I succeed in getting a horse and go hunting all the winter, she doesn't see why she shouldn't enjoy herself in a lively spot, where her two little wards can learn French), I ask what do they mean by "superficial" drainage?

Chinton replies, that it's an official term for no drainage at all.

Barnley denies this.

Happy Thought.—As they are both getting warm on the subject, drop it, and remark that there can be no doubt about Boulogne being a pleasant place to stop at.

"Depends for how long," says Barnley.

"Yes, and what sort of a place you like," says Chinton.

"It's healthy enough," observes Barnley.

"If you once get acclimatised to the absence of drainage," remarks Chinton.

"Not absence, Chinton," interposes Barnley, hotly. "Not absence."

"Say 'superficial,'" I suggest; not having the slightest idea of what I mean by it.

The word acts like a magic soothing syrup on them.

* This conversation led to some results; good I hope. The following translation appeared in *L'Impartial*, a local paper, which commented upon it with a view to sanitary reform at Boulogne.—*Le Voici!:*—

BOULOGNE-SUR-MER.

"Je suis venu à Boulogne avec un billet de retour; j'y dois passer un jour ou deux tandis que mes bons amis en Angleterre me cherchent un cheval.

"Me voici sur le port; la mer est basse. Pouah! quelle horrible odeur! C'est infect! Un de mes amis, qui connnaît Boulogne, me dit que ce sont les égouts.

"Un ami qui connaît mieux Boulogne que l'autre, me dit que non, que ça ne provient pas des égouts, par une excellente raison: Boulogne n'a pas d'égouts.

Happy Thought.—The Superficial Soothing Syrup.

" Is it cold in winter here? " I ask, having noticed that, in

"Mon premier ami, Barnley, qui a étudié la question, répond vivement qu'il lui demande bien pardon, mais qu'aucune ville n'a plus d'égouts que Boulogne.

"Mon second ami, Chinton, qui aime à fairedes mots, réplique: 'Oui, des égouts à ciel ouvert : disons drainage superficiel, très-superficiel même.'

"Barnley, pris au dépourvu, admet en soupirant que le drainage n'est, en effet que trop superficiel.

"Or, il y a là une question qui m'intéresse. Je suis venu ici pour voir si je trouverai des appartements pour ma tante qui ne demanderait pas mieux, pendant que je serais à courre le renard, que de s'installer pour l'hiver dans une ville agréable où ses deux petites pupilles pourraient apprendre le français.

"Je pose donc à Chinton la question : 'Qu'entendez-vous par drainage superficiel?'

"Chinton me répond que c'est là une expression de bureau pour l'absence de tout système d'égouts.

"Barnley réplique que ce n'est pas cela du tout.

"Comme je les vois qui commencent à s'échauffer, je quitte ce sujet dangereux, et je remarque qu'il est incontestable que Boulogne est un agréable séjour.

"'Ça dépend de la durée du séjour,' répond Barnley.

"'Oui, et de vos goûts,' ajoute Chinton.

"'La ville est saine,' fait Barnley.

"'Oui, pour ceux qui peuvent vivre sans égouts,' dit Chinton d'un air railleur.

"'Ne dites donc pas sans égouts,' répartit Barnley vivement.

"'Alors disons, avec drainage superficiel,' leur dis-je, sans me douter le moins du monde de ce que je voulais leur dire.

" Ce mot les mit d'accord."

Et, en effet, il y avait de quoi les mettre d'accord.

Ils ne pourraient pas même y contredire messieurs nos édiles qui laissent une ville de plaisance, une station balnéaire de premier ordre, le

most other places, it generally *is* colder at that season than at others. [*Typical Developments—Notes on Climate*—Vol. XIII., p. 261—as the Publishers' advertisements say, "*Shortly.*"]

"Cold?" returns Chinton. "Very."

"How can you say '*Very*'?" remonstrates Barnley. "It's beautifully sheltered, and there's hardly any very cold weather in the winter."

"How can it be sheltered?" retorts Chinton, "when it's on the coast, and open to the sea?"

This does sound like a poser.

"Sheltered by the cliffs," explains Barnley.

"Cliffs be blowed!" says Chinton, shortly.

Barnley and Chinton always travel together, and are looked upon as inseparables. I don't understand them; but, on consideration, put it down to Human Nature.

Happy Thought.—Study Barnley and Chinton. By the way, they don't seem to study one another; at least, not with any very satisfactory result.

They both go off together, promising to meet me afterwards on the Pier, where I am going to breakfast at the

rendez-vous de la fashion anglaise et française, dans un déplorable état de salubrité.

Ils pourront, ils devront surtout faire leur profit de ces remarques, quelque légère qu'en soit la forme ; car elles sont malheureusement trop vraies. Nous les avons trouvées dans une feuille anglaise dont la circulation est égale à celle des journaux les plus répandus, et dont l'influence en matière de villégiature et d'amusements est sans égale parmi nos voisins d'outre-Manche. &c., &c.

Restaurant, which is, apparently, the only thoroughly French place remaining in Boulogne.

Happy Thought.—Go on studying Human Nature while waiting for breakfast.

Old Gentleman enters. The *Dame du Comptoir* cheerfully salutes him, and, politely, the brisk *Garçon* takes him round the table, where the materials for breakfasts and dinners are temptingly displayed (*i.e.*, kidneys in geraniums, chickens in parsley, sausages in nasturtiums, and a real live quail, with chickweed, in a cage like a rat-trap) ; but, in answer to the waiter's list, and after a close inspection with his eyeglasses, he says in English, "Nong, nong, I don't want that, I'm looking for——" And he continues his search. Lady at the counter elevates her eyebrows ; waiter shrugs his shoulders. More Human Nature. Also two more Human Natures, French Boatmen taking raw spirits at a side-table.

Old Gentleman looks at me appealingly. I catch his eye. He sees in me a fellow countryman, and, as it were, clings to me.

"I have been asking them," he says, addressing me, plaintively, "for a bun."

He must be seventy-three, if a day.

I inform him that, of all things in the world, he has just hit upon *the* one thing they haven't got. He thanks me sincerely, and disappears. As I never again see him in Boulogne, I conclude that, either having come to Boulogne for Buns, and, having been bitterly disappointed, he left by

the next Boat,—(doing everything as much as possible with the letter "B"—from Britain to Boulogne for Buns in a Boat—reminding me of the old game, I love my love with a B, because she is Beautiful; I hate her with a B, because she's Bumptious. I took her to Boulogne and treated her to Buns, and her name was Belinda)—or he immediately threw himself into the sea. Tragic end. "What, no Buns! So he died, and she immediately married the Barber." Odd, another B!

I explain to the *Dame* and the *Garçon* what the ancient stranger wanted. In answer to their inquiries, I give it in a dictionary form, as under the letter B:—

B. Bun. *Une spécialité Anglaise; une espèce de gâteau*—pause here to express it exactly. Everybody much interested, particularly the two sea-faring men, with raw spirits, in the corner.

Happy Thought. To continue—*Vous comprenez* (always say *vous comprenez* when a little uncertain of your own meaning), *c'est une quelque chose qu'on ne peut pas facilement digérer, et*——

Happy Thought, for a finish.—— *et, en effet* (this is also a useful formula) *c'est une chose qui ne fait pas de bon à l'estomac d'un vieux.*

I am publicly—or rather restaurantly—thanked for my explanation, and the sea-faring men jovially treat themselves to another glass.

During breakfast I meditate whether *digérer* is to digest

or to direct. Satisfactory, however, to find that my explication was understood.

Happy Thought.—Coffee, cigar. Nothing particular to do except to ascertain, generally, by my own sensations, how my Aunt would like it. Stroll back again to try the smells once more. Better, much better.

Very lively place. Nothing but English spoken apparently. Have always heard that "shady people" went to Boulogne.

Happy Thought.—Suspect everybody who speaks English, and avoid any place which advertises Beer and Billiards.

(Odd; among the "B's" again.) I *do* wonder that Buns are not understood here. Why, there's a Hotel de Bath, I believe. Perhaps I shall read in the Hotel window, "*Ici on vend les Buns de Bath.*" Might start an opposition to the *Hôtel des Bains* and call it *Hôtel des Buns.* Might be an attraction to one section of society. My theory is that everybody represents a section of society. That Old Gentleman who, evidently, couldn't get on without his Bun, having, perhaps, never omitted it from childhood upwards, of course represents one section of the public. Well, the *Hôtel des Buns* would attract *his* section.

Happy Thought.—Start it and make a fortune. Foresee a number of imitations immediately following suit. *Hôtel des Buns aux prunes*, *Hôtel des Buns simples*, *Hôtel des Buns à la Croix chaude*, *Hôtel des Buns à quart sous*, &c. &c.

Happy Thought.—Finally, only get a medical man to take up the subject, write an Essay on Buns, and start the Bun Cure! Next step, to set up an establishment by the sea-side, get, in the course of two months, testimonials from highly respectable people, Nobility and Gentry, who have been restored by Buns, and are deeply grateful.

Great thing to get a letter from a Bishop, saying,—

"*Sir,—I have now taken one of your Buns, per diem, for three months, and have not had a return of the Thingummies*" (whatever it might be) "*to which I had previously been a martyr. I can now preach for three hours at a stretch, without the slightest inconvenience.*

Yours,

BATH AND QUITE WELLS."

Patent a peculiar sort of Bun (none genuine unless stamped with say a "T," like "Pat-a-cake, Pat-a-cake, Baker's man") crush opposition, and make ten thousand a year easily with a new Chelsea Bun House.

Happy Thought.—Haven't got the pluck to do it myself. Suggest it to a friend who has, and take so much down for the idea. Not much capital wanted. Safe to pay. Few things, to begin with, are so popular as Buns, and it's ten points out of fifteen in your favour if you start with something popular. Ventilate the subject.

Happy Thought.—Give up literature and take to hotel keeping. Or do both. Why not? Write my *Typical Developments* in my own name, and keep the Hotel under

another. Besides who's to know that I *do* keep a Hotel if I don't tell them?

Friends would come down, see me at the Hotel. "Hallo you here?" "Yes," I could reply, "capital place to stop at. I've been here for some time." I could puff it, enormously, without being suspected, and, to keep up appearances, I would dine in the coffee-room, make a row about the bill, when I would always be in the wrong, and the Hotel manifestly right, and then say, audibly, "I thought I'd get 'em to take something off; but I must say they're deuced honest people, and, after all, seventeen shillings for such magnificent champagne as they've got here, is *not* dear." Carry out this *rôle* well, and here's another fortune.

That's two fortunes I've thought of this morning within the last five minutes. Wonder if that *vin ordinaire* was of a better quality than usual.

Happy Thought.—Paid my bill. Go back by boat to Folkestone at night. Choose night, *because there's nobody up to look at you when you arrive.*

CHAPTER IV.

(FROM BOULOGNE TO FOLKESTONE—BY NIGHT.)

FIND that there is only one thing against returning at night, which is, that there is no Night Passengers' Boat.

There is a boat at 1 P.M. to London, all the way direct. Sea passage, about eight hours.

Chinton says, "It's a first-rate way of going."

Barnley admits it, "if," he adds, "you're not in a hurry."

"And if," I say, "you happen to be a good sailor."

"Aren't you?" asks Chinton.

"I don't know," I reply. "I don't know whether I am or not."

This indecision is the result of years' experience. I consider it safer to give myself out publicly as a bad sailor, on the chance of turning out a remarkably good one, and astonishing everyone on board; among others no one more than myself. *My* sea-sickness, or, to use a more cheerful phrase, my sea-wellness, depends upon all sorts of things at different times, and can't be reduced to a certainty. I have known myself well and hearty during a seventeen hours' voyage, enjoying sleep, enjoying meals, enjoying cigars or

pipes (this is *very* rare), and enjoying the vessel's lurch delighting in the waves, revelling in the breezes, and smiling in pity on the miseries of my fellow-passengers.

I have known myself—but not recognised myself at all as the bold sailor above described—well, *up to a certain point.* This "certain point" was where somebody said, "Now we're on the bar." I replied faintly, feeling suddenly pale and staggery, "Are we?" and, in another second, for no sort of reason that I could make out, except that this confounded man had told me "we were on the bar," I was groaning in agony, with my head in the wrong direction over the ship's side.

I have known myself (again quite as somebody else in no way related to the foregoing portraits) come on board, feel ill immediately, long before the vessel was even in motion, foresee a fearful passage, make *all my arrangements*, calmly beforehand, even down to an anticipatory tip to the steward to look after me as soon as possible, and be very kind to *me* in particular, and then, on our leaving the harbour and being fairly started, all qualms have *nearly* vanished, and, finally, I have dropped off into a fitful and unrefreshing slumber, only to be thoroughly aroused by being told, "Here we are!" and finding myself at my destination without ever having been ill at all.

I have found that sometimes the place for me was "below" on a couch at once, and stay there. More often that "below" wouldn't do at all.

Sometimes I have found that reading was an excellent preventive; at others, I couldn't read a line.

The conclusion of this is, without adducing further painful instances, the Less of the Sea the Better.

The idea of a Tunnel is charming, if quite safe, and carried out with taste.

Happy Thought.—On the model of the Burlington Arcade. Train up and down the middle: promenade on both sides with shops. To make the Tunnel itself quite secure, it should be the central part of an enormous building, a submarine palace, as big as the Royal Exchange, and the top should be elevated several feet above the level of the Channel forming a handsome bridge, across which pedestrians, who preferred this route, could, in fine weather, walk, merely paying at one end, as at Waterloo bridge, for example. I make a present of this suggestion to the English and French authorities who have the scheme in hand. I cannot see why this can't be done. Why isn't it feasible?

Chinton says, "My dear fellow, if you were an engineer, you'd soon see its utter impracticability."

But I am *not* an engineer, and, if it were left to *me* I should begin it—in my own way, I admit—but at once.

An engineer has his profession to think of, his rules to go by, his precedents, and so forth. None of these considerations would have a pin's weight with me. I have often found that knowing nothing of gardening, I have made such suggestions to Gardeners as have perfectly staggered them by their originality, and they have hastened to adopt them. I recollect one instance about grapes. A Professional Gardener, very high up in his art, and always on a ladder

nailing something up, insisted that grapes wouldn't grow where flowers were.

Happy Thought.—I said "Try."

As it was my own garden I *did* try. The grapes grew beautifully, so did the flowers. The High-art Gardener shook his head over it, and said he'd never heard of such a thing before. It upset all his theories, all his precedents, and from that moment he went in for eccentric cultivation. He is now perfectly harmless.

"But what I mean is," I say to Barnley and Chinton, to whom I propound my theory, "if the engineers won't do it, give the job to some one who will strike out a new line, or at all events give some one who has got a clear idea on the subject, and an interest in it, the entire direction of the engineers, and let them simply carry out his design."

Happy Thought.—Myself. Director of the Submarine Tunnel Co. Why not? I can tell a tailor how I want a coat made, a coat which he had never thought possible before, though I can't make it myself. I can tell a builder the kind of house I require, a house which up to that time he wouldn't have ventured on building, and he'll erect it under my guidance. There at once is the division of Labour, *i.e.* The Director and the Erector.

This discussion takes us to the Steam Packet Boat Office. There *is* a boat going to-night, but it is only a merchandise boat; it takes bales, cargo, and luggage.

"No passengers?"

"O yes, if you like to go by it."

I would like to go by it certainly, as it starts at 10.15 P.M., and arrives at 12.30 at Folkestone; and I do not object to be booked as bales, cargo, or luggage. I will, if necessary, enter myself as Mr. Bales, or Mr. Portmanteau.

I take my ticket, and descend.

Dodge that—making you take your ticket on shore before you've seen the boat. It is *not* inviting. Packages and boxes everywhere. Sloppy decks: barely room to walk, and almost impossible to avoid puddles. Below, small, close, and dull. Evidently it is *not* intended for passengers, of whom there are about half-a-dozen, and *is* intended for bales and boxes, of which there are some hundreds.

Down-stairs, I mean "below," clearly won't do for me, or rather clearly *would* "do" for me effectually. This is where the Passengers are.

Happy Thought.—Stay on deck with the baggage. Being for present purposes of freight merely a portmanteau, I will stop with the portmanteaus. When with Romans be a Roman. When with portmanteaus be a portmanteau. The large white boxes are labelled (I see by the dim lantern light) "Fragile. This side up."

That's the next question for me. I am certainly Fragile, on board a ship, and for the remainder of the direction I decide upon lying down on the top of a carefully packed pile of boxes, close to the Funnel.

Happy Thought.—Almost central position on ship; also

warm. My *one* rule on board is, "When once fixed don't move." No matter how or where you fix yourself, once there, let nothing tempt you to alter your position. Mind this: you move at your peril.

Barnley and Chinton sing out *Bon voyage* from the Quay where they have been standing, only it was so dark I couldn't see them, and I sing out in return, "Good bye!" but I do it resting on my elbow, lying on the boxes, and without stirring.

Happy Thought.—Beautiful moon appears. Lovely night. Merely a ripple. It is cold. My arm is cramped. I won't move, for I am uncertain. I can't say I feel quite well, but I am sure that my only chance of safety lies in masterly inaction on the top of these boxes.

Boulogne gradually receding from view. Very pretty place; most picturesque by moonlight. Pity about the superficial drainage. Most difficult to get into an exactly comfortable position when lying down. Elbow begins to feel like a spike, and my wrist as if it were being bent back by icy steel. Must move for a second, but only my arm. My knees are cold. Really it's so calm I might sit up on the boxes, and enjoy the night. I will. * * * * No: *I don't move from my recumbent position again.* I knew it was dangerous. The ripple has, I think, increased to just the slightest swell. There's a breeze, too. I don't like to ask the sailor who is standing near me anything about it, as I am so afraid he would tell me that "We're on the bar." If he should say that, I'm off these boxes in two twos. Even

thinking of the possibility of such a reply makes me uncomfortable. O, Imagination! What crimes are committed in thy name! (or something to that effect which occurs to me suddenly, I don't know why. I feel cold; but I fancy my head is hot). Boulogne receding.

Sailor standing by me. I begin to hate him for standing by me.

He speaks respectfully. "We shall have a beautiful passage—be in in less than two hours."

Happy Thought.—I will certainly give this man sixpence when we arrive at Folkestone; that is, if I am well the whole way. He has revived me.

He insists upon giving me his P-jacket rolled up for a pillow, and further insists upon my accepting from him a tarpaulin to throw over my legs.

"Tarpaulin!" I say, suspiciously. "Why, you don't think there'll be any sea on?" Because, you see, I know the use of tarpaulin on a steamboat.

"Sea!" he says. "Lor' no, Sir. Only you might feel cold."

"O, thank you—yes—then—if you please."

"Yes, Sir, I'll get you one."

He doesn't say, "Aye, aye, Sir." So perhaps he is not a regular salt.

I am now comfortable, that is, considering the circumstances. But I mustn't move: and I won't. Lovely night! Recollect a song of that name when I was a boy:—

"Lovely night! lovely night;
Some have called thee dark and drear!
But the light; but the light!
Is to me not half so dear."

Idiotic!—it can't be dark and drear if it's lovely, and *vice versâ*. And if the light to him (the singer) is not half so dear, what price did he pay for his gas or candles? . . . . . Dreamy state. . . . Cramp generally . . . feel as if I were in irons . . . stiff as the Mesmerised Boy who used to sleep in the air (as I'm doing now) with his elbow supported by a stick . . . . Boulogne almost obliterated: every second it is becoming . . . . fainter and fainter . . .

Happy Thought (this time).—I'm quite well. Fainter and fainter, *but I'm not.* Sleep, gentle sleep! Wonder how much I shall have to give the sailor, on landing, for the use of his tarpaulin and P-jacket. Sleep on it. * * * "Folkestone in view," says the tarpaulin man at my elbow.

CHAPTER V.

RETURN TO ENGLAND—SEARCH FOR HORSE RECOMMENCES.

ATEST bulletin from myself to myself: "Arrived at Folkestone, 12.30 A.M."

Happy Thought.—"All's well that ends well." Thank goodness! ended well.

A kindly sailor is at my elbow. "Had quite a nice berth of it, Sir," he says. This really means, "Look here: you've had a jacket and tarpaulin in use all this time, and that can't be done for nothing, you know. What are you going to stand?" I reply, cheerfully, "Yes, I *have* had a very good berth," but ignore the implied request. He turns quite round to me, and almost whispers (adopting this sort of undertone, I believe, so as not to be overheard by the Captain), "I should like to drink your health this morning, Sir."

Happy Thought.—No public-houses open after twelve.

As I do not, however, like to confront him with an objection which would bring up vast political questions, on which he may have strong opinions, it occurs to me—(several things often occur to me before I lay out sixpence in this way)—to

ask him "Are you the man who lent me his tarpaulin and jacket?"

Happy Thought.—Be just before you are generous.

Truth compels him to own that he is *not* the man I took him for. Then, I explain to him, he, personally, has no claim upon me. He admits the justice of my remark, and, catching sight of the Captain, I fancy, who, like "the sweet little cherub" in the nautical ballad, is perched up aloft, keeping a watchful eye on poor Jack——

——By the way, "a cherub *perched*" anywhere is a grand instance of poetic license. [*Note.*—To go into this thoroughly in *Typical Developments*, Vol. X., under "C" for "Cherub," Division A., "Artistic Theology."]——

——the kindly sailor is gradually absorbed into the deep shadow, and, like a baffled spirit of evil, disappears in the gloom.

Then the real man appears. Quite dramatic. There is an Eye, too, from somewhere above on him, as he appears shuffling and uneasy, and immediately on receiving the money (two strange coins, belonging to no particular nation, and given me in change with some francs at Boulogne), he, too, glides away, and vanishes. He seemed perfectly satisfied before he vanished. Perhaps I may have given him two rare coins, invaluable to a collector. At all events, he is, evidently, a collector.

One other passenger lands with me: a long man, in a long coat, inclined to be confidential. I am not. Lonely place, the harbour. No one in sight. Large Hotel near at

hand. Remember it as first-rate when I was stopping there. Everybody civil and pleasant. Long man observes that he was *not* going there at first, but, since I recommended it, he will. He was, in fact, he says, going to the Hôtel de Paris, just on the opposite side; but since *I* am going to the Big Hotel, why so will he. Quite hearty and affectionate. I tell him he couldn't do better, and it occurs to me that if the Big Hotel is, as I've heard, chock full, and there's only one bed there, which of us will have it? I will, for choice, as I don't like the sound of "Hôtel de Paris" in England: it's too much like Leicester Square.

At the door of the Big Hotel, close to the harbour, Folkestone. I anticipate a hearty greeting (because when I stayed here before, I had established most amicable relations with the Bootses and Waiters generally), even though qualified by regret at their being unable to give me the best bed-room in the house. No signs of life anywhere. The Hotel has its eyes shut, its eyelids closed, and you can almost hear it snoring in the moonlight. Boots is asleep, too.

Happy Thought.—The Sleeping Booty.

Ring him up, or ring him down; depends, of course, upon where he may be. Through the glass door, we see Night Porter advancing. I notice a deep, a very deep, growl from somewhere. Not a sharp, short growl, with something in it of the ejaculatory brevity of a satisfied grunt, but a prolonged, steady growl, proceeding, I soon find, from something large and black underneath the hall table; a growl not to be finished properly, except by a sudden leap out upon the

detested object, who, in this case, is myself, being nearer the table than my Chance Companion. This is a cheerful welcome on one's return to England! and so specially friendly in a Hotel.

"Any Rooms?"

The Porter, a very tall man, with weak knees, and only half awake, is uncertain. Growling going on. Perhaps the dog has come in late, and hasn't been able to get a bed, except underneath the table, and he's growling at that and not at us.

The uncertain young man is a Boots by day, and a Porter by night. Another Boots appears: he is a short Boots. Blucher Boots, and (the tall one) Wellington Boots. Consultation between the two heroes. I foresee the result: so does my Chance Companion, who is beginning to regret that he didn't carry out his original intention of patronising the Hôtel de Paris.

Chance Companion stupidly says to Boots, "I'm only here for the night." Of course they won't care what they do with him for only one night.

The consequence of this is, that we shall be Numbers 269 and 266 in the books of the Hotel, and be stowed away among the boxes.

Happy Thought.—In order to prevent this, I will tell the Boots, that, if I like the place, I will stop here some weeks, and I remark, how pleasant it was when I was here some time ago.

I advance towards them in order to say this and ingratiate

myself with them. Wellington Boots requests me to stop in the Hall where I am, and not approach the spot where he and Blucher Boots are deliberating.

To this (being taken aback by this unexpected rebuff from Wellington Boots, and giving up all idea of ingratiating myself with him, at all events) I reply that "I shall stop where I like." Long Boots angry ; Short Boots hesitating.

"Are there any rooms?" I ask.

"That," answers Wellington Boots, irritably, "is what we're talking about, if you'll stop where you are."

I deny his right to order a visitor about, and have a good mind to ring up the Manager or Proprietor, whoever he is. If I knew which bell would summon him, I'd do it.

Wellington Boots is wild at this. "Then," says he, quite losing all the temper he ever had, "we haven't any rooms."

I insist upon it that there are rooms, and he suddenly lights two chamber candles, and tells us to follow Blucher Boots.

My Chance Companion, who has been watching this scene, and casting occasional pleading looks at me, as much as to say, "Don't, please, or I shan't get a bed, and I'm so tired," now takes up his bag, and is evidently pleased at the prospect of immediate sheets.

But I am resolute. "Where," I demand, "are these rooms?"

"He'll shew you, if you'll go," says Wellington, indicating Blucher with his head, and turning away sulkily.

SCENE.—*Hall of Hotel. Dim light. Arch, right hand*

leading to passage, where stands, pausing, Blucher with two candlesticks and candles lighted, preceding weary Traveller with hand-bag. Myself in the centre, with bag and stick, in a sturdy Cromwellian-take-away-that-bauble sort of attitude. Wellington Boots going sulkily back to his bed somewhere on the left. Growling accompaniment at intervals from under the table.

N.B. As they say in play-books, with regard to stage-directions, the reader is supposed to be on the stage facing the audience.

"Are the rooms," I demand, "at the top of the House?"

"They are," returns the Long Boots, scowling, as though the admission had been wrung from him by my severe cross-examination.

"Then," I say to my Chance Companion, "you take 'em: I shan't. I shall go to the Hôtel de Paris."

My Chance Companion, clearly wearied by the strife, throws towards me one despairing glance, with something, too, of reproach in it, which he perhaps means should haunt me to my dying day, and follows the Short Boots as though I had ordered him away to instant execution in a private room.

"Farewell, Brave Spaniard! and when next ———", but he has walked off.

I go to the Hôtel de Paris, *Anglicé* superior sort of English tavern. Brisk person to welcome me. Room first floor. Large bed. Gigantic washing-stand. Everything thoroughly English in the Hôtel de Paris. Prints on the walls; a sufficiently rare collection to distract me for some

time from going to sleep. The subject of one of the prints is the Earl of Roxburghe, Marquis of something, Earl of, &c. &c., with *all* his titles in full, fishing in view of a Bridge and Abbey; also portrait of the distinguished fish which his Grace is honouring by catching, and which is distinctly shown under the water. By the way I only suppose the sportsman to be the noble Earl in question, in consequence of the picture being dedicated to him by his Grace's obliged servants, &c., &c. There's a glorious picture over the mantelpiece of a magnificient bird, half swan, half stork, in a Primæval Pond, lighted up with a Turneresque sunset. Then gradually off to sleep.

First morning in England.—Awake. Strange dream. Hasten to note it down while fresh, because it's so odd. I didn't dream about the Duke of Roxburghe and the Swan.

My Dream.—I dreamt I was waltzing through the streets of a town (quite strange to me, yet which I felt I knew perfectly well), and was going on waltzing in perfect time, airily and gracefully (I felt conscious of the grace of my actions), yet somehow without ever turning round. This apparently impossible feat I seemed to be performing without effort, and quite naturally, to a beautiful tune, played on a barrel-organ, which, at the same time, I couldn't hear. Strange, too, I woke waltzing, and humming some tune which I couldn't catch.

Happy Thought.—Home again. Report to my Aunt about Boulogne. It won't do. Boulogne is, I tell her, a *ville sans égouts*, or, at all events, with only superficial

égouts. She hands me several letters from friends, which have arrived in my absence, about the horse I am buying.

Happy Thought.—Think I've got something to suit me at last. Devote myself now to purchase of horse.

CHAPTER VI.

IN SEARCH OF A HORSE.

IND, on my return home, the report has suddenly got about that I am looking out for a horse.

When I say "got about," I mean within a radius of at least ten miles.

I ask my Aunt if she has mentioned it to any one.

"No, my dear," she replies, "I've not said a word on the subject."

She seems as hurt and annoyed as if I had accused her of having divulged a most important secret.

I can't go anywhere in my own neighbourhood without hearing about the horse that "I'm looking out for." People seem to think I want to raise a private cavalry troop.

At the Railway Station, for example, the Station-Master—the last person I should have thought of, as connected with horses (unless he has a grudge against the Railway, and wishes to encourage driving)—smiles pleasantly, but still knowingly—I can't help remarking this universally, that whenever a person, no matter who he may be, has anything to say or do about horses, he instantly becomes more or less knowing in his manner—I believe the Archbishop of Canter-

bury himself would cock his shovel-hat, and smile learily ("learily" *is* the word) if he had anything to say about a horse,—Well, the Station-Master smiles in this way, and observes—

"I hear you're looking out for a horse, Sir."

I say "Yes, I am," as unconcernedly as possible, as I have a sort of idea that he'll suddenly produce one from the engine-house, or the porters' room, or some unexpected place, by way of taking me by surprise, and say, "Here he is, Sir; here's the very thing for you!" and expect me to purchase it on the spot.

So I am reserved, and suspicious. As I go on, I become more reserved and suspicious. My nature is, I am sure, originally frank and trustful; but looking out for a horse will, I am sure, even at this early stage, embitter my life.

I almost begin to expect men jumping out at me, from behind trees, or palings, with "Here you are, Sir! here's the thing to suit you!" and I am aware of being perpetually, and painfully, on the alert.

The Station-Master seems to be thinking the matter over. I don't go away and leave him, as I see he has something more to say. Perhaps, not being professionally a horse-dealer, he doesn't quite know how to put it, or it may be his first attempt at this sort of thing.

He frowns to himself, as it were, and appears to be going through either some violent mental effort of memory, or a struggle with his better nature and his early religious education.

I ask him, "Have you heard of anything?"

"Well," he replies, slowly, the struggle evidently not being quite over—"Well, no—not exactly. Only——" (I see he's coming out with half the truth)—"there's Mr. Fossit of Barntree was saying, the other morning here, as he had something as he thought would do for you. I don't know it myself," he adds, cheerfully; "but he was saying, as he thought it was about the sort of thing as you wanted. And," he finishes, with increasing cheerfulness, as though he had relieved his conscience at last, and turned Queen's evidence against Fossit of Barntree, who had tried to make him an accomplice, "I said to Mr. Fossit as he'd better speak to you about it himself. Up Train for Lon'on!"

By the time he has ended he has resumed his own natural honest and pleasant manner, and is at his work again, with the air of a man who has successfully combated a fearful temptation.

I can imagine, that is my increasing suspicious nature can imagine, what will take place at the next meeting between Fossit of Barntree and the Station-Master.

Fossit (whom I don't know from Adam) will come up with the usual deep smile and begin,

"Well, have you seen him since? Eh?"

The Station-Master, perfectly aware that he is alluding to me, but morally afraid to admit that he has thrown Fossit over, will pretend that he doesn't quite catch his (Fossit's) meaning.

Fossit will then continue, cautiously, "Have you seen Mr. Thingummy about that horse, as I was——"

"O!" the Station-Master will cut in, to avoid further explanation. "Yes, and I told him he'd better see you about it himself."

And so he will go off, leaving his companion to understand that he, the Station-Master, won't be a party to any duplicity about this horse, and isn't, to put it plainly, going to stand in with Fossit of Barntree.

Again, in the village, I hear of it from the Post-Master. In partnership with his mother, he is proprietor of a cheese, bacon, and grocery shop, and this, and the post-office, they manage between them. He is a long young man, loosely put together, as if he'd been made up gradually, and added to at different times whenever there might have been some large bones to spare. His face, which is broad and round, and with a very uneven surface, is expressive of chronic astonishment at everything and everybody. I don't believe he was always like this.

I fancy the telegraphic arrangements have frightened him, and that every arrival, or sending of a telegram, conveys a fresh galvanic shock to his nervous system, taking effect on his hair, which is very dry, and of the colour of one of his own pale Dutch cheeses. He has a desk to himself in one corner, where he attends to the Money Orders, occasionally disappearing, when the customer's back is turned, to come up again in the character of a Telegraphic Clerk, in another corner, where the wires work among sides of bacon, sacks of dog-biscuits, soap, cheeses, and red herrings. From this operation he emerges quite red in the face, as though they were saying *such* things by telegraph that no respectable

young man could listen to without blushing. I drop in to buy some stamps.

Happy Thought.—Object for a walk, to go to the village and buy stamps.

Must have some object in view, or should never take any exercise. When my horse is here I can ride in and buy stamps ; or ride to all sorts of villages for miles round to buy stamps. Could (for the sake of making a necessity for exercise) invent for myself a pleasant fiction as to their selling better stamps at one village than another. The farther the village, the better the stamps. Besides, there's something of the genuine countrified idea about this: it's like going about marketing: it suggests the pillion and my Aunt up behind with a basket: Old Dobbin, jog-trot, top-boots, heavy-handled whip, low-crowned hat, and dialogue along the road. "Well, Fayrmer, 'ow be'est this marning? an 'ow be yew mam?" and then we say we're going to buy some stamps, and trot on. Of course, this is fanciful, but still there is a pastoral sort of idea about it.

"A shilling's worth of stamps, please," I say.

The Young Post-Master, astonished as usual, appears to be taken aback by this demand, and as he cannot at the moment lay his hand on the stamps, an animated discussion ensues between himself and his mother, who is having tea in the little room behind the glass-windowed door, and won't come out.

The Young Post-Master won't open the door and show his mother. He seems to keep her in there as a secret, and, as

he speaks through the door, and turning a little away from me (his audience), its effect is to remind me of a Ventriloquist's entertainment, where the performer pretends to be holding a conversation with some one on the other side of the wall, or outside a door.

"Mother, where didyer put the stomps?" he says, in his own voice.

Ventriloquist's mother (I mean Post-Master's mother from within), "You'll find 'em in the drawer o' the left 'and side, John."

Post-Master rummages in the drawer, and calls out, "No, th'aint there." Then he goes to the door again, turns the handle, and holds it the slightest bit ajar, which is exactly what I've seen Ventriloquists do, only without a real mother on the other side—ordinarily some imaginary acquaintance called "Tommy," who has got somehow into a gas-pipe, or some eccentric stranger in the chimney, who is usually addressed with the utmost courtesy on the part of the Ventriloquist, as "Sir;" each sentence beginning in this way, "What are you doing up there, Sir?" to which Eccentric Stranger in the Chimney replies, rudely, "What's that to you, Sir?"

I have noticed that the Eccentric Stranger in the Chimney is invariably rude, while the Ventriloquist is most markedly polite. The Man in the Chimney refuses to move, and asserts his right to stay there as long as he likes; the Ventriloquist, still polite, warns him that he is lighting a fire, when the Eccentric Stranger becomes abjectly piteous, and only asks for time to be allowed to reach the top and make

his escape. By the time he has gained this point, the Eccentric Person's character has quite changed; he has become less and less rude, and finishes (from the top of the chimney, and supposed to be out on the roof) by wishing the entertainer "Good night," to which the amiable Ventriloquist below replies, "Good night, and mind you don't let me catch you in the chimney again, Sir," which remark elicits a faint reply, in a very distant voice, almost three houses off by this time, "All right, Sir, good night."

This passes through my mind, while the entertainment is being given by the Post-Master and his mother in the shop.

He finds the stamps under the butter, which surprises him less than I should have thought, and, having carefully wrapped them in brown paper, hands them to me, saying, at the same time,—

"Thank you, Sir."

Then he has to find change for half-a-crown, which causes another entertainment with his mother in the back parlour, as to where the change is that some one brought in just now and was put by mistake into the Money Order drawer.

This being found, he gives it to me, and observes, "Are you settled yet, Sir, with a horse? I heard as you were looking about for one a while ago."

I tell him I am not suited, and he calls out to his mother,—

"I say, Mother, where was that as Mr. Holt's Coachman said as he knew there was one to be sold?"

"Grangeby's," answers a voice from within.

"At Grangeby's," repeats the Post-Master, explaining to me the answer of the Oracle in the back room.

(*Note* for *Typical Development*, Vol. XIV. O. *Oracles*, how they were done in old times. O. O.—Old Oracles. Never hit on the subject before.)

"Grangeby's; it's the builder's, Sir, along here, top o' the hill. I think it's the sort o' thing that might suit you, Sir."

Why should a builder's horse suit me? Why should the Post-Master think so?

Happy Thought.—What does he want for it?

The Post-Master doesn't know; doesn't suppose much. I pretend to take a note of Grangeby's address, and thank the Post-Master.

Happy Thought.—Grangeby's is too near at hand; no excuse to go to Grangeby's. Besides, what's a builder to do with horse-dealing? Suspect something wrong here. No. As I originally intended, I'll call on Clumber the Flyman; he, as it were, lives among the horses, and it's his line. Besides, it's a walk to get to him.

Happy Thought.—Take a walk. To Clumber's. Off.

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER THE HORSE—THOUGHTS BY THE WAY—ON PROVERBS —ON LANGUAGES—A RIDDLE—THOUGHTS ON ART.

OLLOA! Winter's getting on. Must get this horse, or where's my exercise? Can't do my little exercise without a horse; but fancy trying to do an exercise *on* a horse!—say a German exercise! I should soon find I had committed ein Irrthum, and I from my Pferd should have to hinuntergehen.

Dislike the German character—I mean characters of the German Alphabet. It looks like a sort of nutcracker language.

Happy Thought.—German was probably invented by some one who was trying to learn Welsh.

Talking of languages, everyone says Italian is *so* easy, because everyone has learnt Latin. But Italian would be very much easier if the Italians had only stuck to their Latin, and not tried to better it. Don't tell me that "*giorno*" is in any way suggested by "*dies*." There's an *i* in both words, but, for the matter of that, there's an eye in a needle.

Happy Thought.—It suddenly occurs to me that I've

invented a proverb. "He has an eye, and so has a needle," must be a companion proverb to "He has a head, and so has a pin." As some one said (forget who, but look him up), "Let who will make the nation's songs, I'll do the proverbs."

This suggests rules for making a nation. First, begin with inventing a set of proverbs. Then—— I don't quite see the next step at present; but to anyone who wants to start a new nation (and there must be some wanted by this time) it's well worth consideration.

These ideas occur to me while I am on my road to call on Clumber, the flyman, about that horse he's got, which, I've heard from Spoker, the carriage-builder, or carriage-mender (I think he must be a carriage-mender, as I've often seen him at work mending a carriage, but never caught him building one), tells me, is, in his (Spoker's) opinion, "Just the very thing to suit me."

Must be on my guard in dealing with anyone about a horse. Can't get out of my head the rhyme that first occurred to me when I thought of calling on Clumber, the flyman. As I must get it out of my head at some time or other, so as to allow the brain free action for other subjects (*Note.*—Most important to read up Dr. Carpenter's Lectures on Brain. I think I see something new for *Typical Developments*, Vol. II., Thirteenth Edition, revised, corrected, and with considerable additions, under "B" for Brain), I put it into my pocket-book thus :—

"Simple Simon
Met a flyman

Coming through the gorse
Said Simple Simon
To the Flyman,
'How about that horse?'"

This verse might lead on to a story. Perhaps this is the way most poetry is commenced. If so, is this an inspiration, or not? If not, what? Write, and ask Tennyson. By the way, *à propos* of national songs and proverbs, I don't think, on reflection, that when I was once starting in the latter line, as proverb-maker, I would ever say to anyone else, "Let who will make the songs, I'll do the proverbs;" because, why shouldn't I do both? Songs pay better than Proverbs. Get Santley to sing one Song, and the fortune of composer, versifier, and publisher is made. But there's nothing to be got out of some one's delivering a Proverb. There may be, as the *entrepreneurs* say, "money in it," but I don't see it, at present.

Happy Thought.—To ask Spoker something more about Clumber's horse. Spoker as a carriage-builder (or mender) must know something about horses. If he doesn't, he looks like it. There's something about Spoker's hat, which he always wears, and his trousers, (which, of course, he is never without—*mais cela va sans dire)* that suggest, to my mind, a knowledge of horseflesh. While at work, the line where his upper half terminates is clearly defined by apron-strings round his waist: his costume being long apron, no coat, and very well brushed hat, and the ends of his sporting trousers seen below, so that when he steps into the road

to see me, with a pen behind his ear and an order-book in his hand, the idea occurs to me that he represents a sort of out-of-door grocer who's had a successful bet on the Derby. A vague description, but if you can imagine somebody, in the above-mentioned costume, ready at any moment to give you long odds, against anything, in currants or preserved ginger, and book it at once, there's Spoker down to the ground: I mean, in appearance.

Happy Thought.—Riddle for Spoker; to put him in a good humour. Where ought a wheelwright to live? Answer: in the wheel-lage.

It doesn't put him in a good humour, as he can't or won't understand it: and clearly thinks I'm laughing at him. I explain that I mean *Village*. He is evidently still of opinion that I'm only trying to get out of it, after deeply wounding his feelings. I must try and restore his temper by hinting that I shall soon be in want of a large carriage. At this he brightens up. I go, largely, into the subject of coaches and carriages, and I feel I've made Spoker happy for the rest of the day. I can imagine the way in which he'll rub his hands when he goes in to dinner (all the little Spokers round the table, and Mrs. Spoker at the head), and say, "Ah! I think I'm in for a good thing now. Mr. So-and-So wants two or three new carriages, and has come to me to ask about them. Thank you, my dear, yes, *I will* take a little of that beef, it looks capital."

Spoker strongly recommends Clumber's horse, in fact, if Spoker himself were in want of such a thing, Clumber's is

what he should get. "What does Clumber want for him?" I ask. Ah, *that* Spoker doesn't know; in fact he doesn't quite know whether Mr. Clumber intends selling him or not. "Here," says Spoker, pointing to a dog-cart, "is the trap he was drove in yesterday—it's just the sort o' thing for him, and did ten miles in half an hour, easy. I'll see if Mr. Clumber's in, if you like, Sir?"

"Yes. Thank you." Spoker goes round the corner. I follow. Perhaps it will be as well not to let Spoker and Clumber be too long together before I join them. Really, horse-buying *does* make me very suspicious.

Clumber, the flyman, is a square-built, trim-whiskered, very respectable, yet unmistakably horsey-looking man, dressed in a greyish suit, presenting a compound of a Quaker, a well-to-do farmer, and a superior Hansom-cab driver, all in one. He has a sharp eye, and so quick a way of constantly turning his head from one side to the other, without moving his body, that it appears as if he were, as a coachman, perpetually hearing the cry of "Whip behind!" and was an adept in flicking a boy neatly on the spokes.

Having time, I look Clumber all over. Considering his low-crowned hat, very much turned up at the brim, his stuff gaiters, and the preponderance of the respectable Quaker and farmer elements over that of the Hansom cabman, I begin to think that he might stand for an ideal portrait of a Rural Dean.

Happy Thought.—Apart from Clumber, what a charming subject for a picture! One can see it, at once, in the

Academy List for next year, "No. 299. '*A Rural Dean*,' by Millais." There he'd be reclining in a meadow, on freshly-made sweet hay: lambkins, with blue ribbon, frisking by his side: flageolet in his right hand: garlands and flowers all about him anyhow: an overturned bowl of syllabub on the short-cropped grass: and one of his shoes off, with a garter strap loose, showing the cotton work and pattern (a great chance for an artist) of the stocking. Laughing girls, with roses and posies, might be seen in the distance dancing towards him, accompanied by boy-choristers in white surplices, and there should be a church (as a background) among the old rook-inhabited trees, so as not to lose sight of the ecclesiastical character *au fond*.

I freely make a present of this beautiful idea to any R.A., or to every one of them, for they could all treat it from their different points of view. For instance:—

63. "*Rural Dean, with his celebrated Sheep-dog, Toby.*"—R. ANSDELL, R.A.

87. "*Broken Advowson.*"—P. H. CALDERON, R.A.

> "Behind the hedge she sobbed unseen,
> And heard her faithless Rural Dean."
> *The Cure*, Book iii., Canto 4.

105. "*The Boulogne Boat. Landing of the Rural Dean at Folkestone.*"—W. P. FRITH, R.A.

4. "*The Rural Deanery.*"—J. C. HORSLEY, R.A.

"The apartments, five in all, were *en suite*, leading into one another by a succession of doors, and through the most remote, when all were open, as on this occasion, might have been seen, very much in per-

spective, and thrown somewhat into a haze by the flood of sunlight streaming in through one of the old square cut windows, the anxious face of the Rural Dean peering forth from the half-open jam closet."—*Diversions of Burly*, vol. ii. chap. iii.

208. "*Old May Day. Mummers saluting the Tooral-rural Dean.*"—H. S. MARKS, A.R.A.

28. "*Portraits of the Rural Dean, with Effie and Jeannie Deans and Mr. Dummy at Whist.* (Presentation Picture.)"—J. E. MILLAIS, R.A.

311. "*Je dîne à la Campagne.*"—J. L. MEISSONIER.

152. "*Rural Dean going to Bath.*"—F. LEIGHTON, R.A.

I jot these down as what might easily be done with the subject if the idea were once caught up.

Spoker, having interviewed Clumber, who is now engaged with a stableman, tells me that the Rural Dean Flyman will attend to me in one minute.

Happy Thought.—Wait one minute, and finish jottings.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT CLUMBER'S — INTERVIEWING THE COB — SQUINTING GROOM—POINTS— UNDECIDED.

HE Cob is brought out into Clumber's Stable-yard. We—Mr. Spoker, Clumber, and myself —eye it in silence. Being nervous about committing myself on the subject, I do not intend to be the first to speak.

"Beautiful Cob, that!" says Mr. Clumber, finding that he must say something. He is standing by me, with his legs wide apart, his hands clasped behind his back, and his head very much on one side, eyeing the mare, not me. "Be-auty, she is! Be-auty!" he repeats, as if he really couldn't get over the fact of her overwhelming loveliness.

The Ostler, who is holding the mare's head in a rope halter, sniffs assent, and relieves his feelings in a slight cough. He squints so horribly that I don't know whether he has his eye on me, or Clumber, or Spoker; or one eye on Clumber and myself, on the left-hand side of the horse, and the other on Spoker, who is on the horse's right.

He is a capital man for Clumber to have out to show the horse, as it is impossible to tell from either of the Groom's

eyes, whether everything is going on in a straightforward manner or not.

I am inclined to think everything is *not* quite straightforward, and have a vague idea of being done by Clumber, Spoker, and the Squinting Groom, who, I fancy (it's only fancy) are all "standing in."

"A be-auty," repeats Clumber, apparently so rapt in the contemplation of the animal's perfections as to be lost in an ecstasy, and to be rather delivering himself of a soliloquy, than addressing anyone of whose presence he is at all conscious. "A little 'orse like her ain't to be met with every day of the week; no, nor yet in a whole year, go all over England and give what you like for 'em. She's a little 'orse as don't mind work,—the more the work, the better she does it,—and a free goer as it's quite a pleasure to see along the road. None of your dancing-master toe-and-trip-up; no, but a good flat, firm, light, and yet-as-you-may-say, solid tread, that don't come down in the same place as where it went up, but takes you over the ground, and ull do her fourteen mile an hour in a dog-cart any day, with a fair country. Why, she's as high-couraged as a thoroughbred," he says, as if he was anticipating some objection, which, perhaps, he thought I *looked* as if I were going to make—not that I have been able at present to collect any definite ideas on the subject, except that I am still haunted by the one notion that I am being done—that Clumber is doing me, and that Spoker and the Groom is "standing in," and secretly taking a lesson in the art of selling a horse from Clumber, to whose speech they listened with undisguised admiration.

Not that the Groom's eye expresses anything except squinting; but his mouth does, and he's evidently enjoying Clumber.

I seem to hear the Squinting Groom murmuring to himself, "Lor, ain't Master a wunner at gammonin' a gent into buying a 'oss as he knows nothin' at all about."

"She's better than a thoroughbred, she is," says Clumber, who is warming with his subject, and is clearly not going to stick at a trifle. "For my part, and I know something of horses, I wouldn't have a thoroughbred at a gift. Now there!" he adds quite defiantly, as if again detecting me in the act of making another objection, "I wouldn't! No, not if a thoroughbred was *h*offered to me, I wouldn't."

Clumber throws in an occasional aspirate with considerable effect.

He expects some observation from me. So I say, as it surprised at what he has told me, and as if it were quite the last thing I should have expected of him, "No, indeed? Wouldn't you, really?"

"No, I wouldn't," he repeats, emphatically, and then, as if afraid of a digression interfering with present business, he resumes his theme. "But here's a horse as is a credit to a gentleman. She'd just do for you. A thorough gentleman's horse, she is; that's what she is; a thorough gentleman's horse."

He has evidently hit upon the right phrase at last, for he repeats over and over again that she is "a thorough gentleman's horse, that's what she is," and evidently means to stereotype this happy expression for future use. He can't

get beyond it: there it is. You can't (it seems to imply) be more than a thorough gentleman, and she's the very thing for such a thorough gentleman as you (meaning myself as the intending purchaser) are. Or, if you are not *quite* the thorough gentleman, then put this horse into your dog-cart, and your reputation will be made.

I'm aware that I ought to do something now. I feel that my turn has come. I ought to ask about her "points." I think, too, I ought to examine her mouth; I know that one tells the age of a horse by its mouth. But how? False teeth? Stupid of me not to have read up the subject before I came here.

Happy Thought.—To appear as if I could judge of her age without bothering myself about the mouth. I say, in as horsey and knowing a manner as I can assume (though I feel the Squinting Groom sees through me in every direction),

"She's not very young, tho', eh?"

Spoker takes upon himself to reply to this.

"She's not over five I think, Sir."

I can't help remarking what a fine horse she is for five years old. It really seems no age. I wish I'd read up all about the ages of horses, how long they live, and how long they're good for work, in "Stonehenge" or some other authority. *Mem.* Buy a book on "The Horse," and come out prepared.

The Squinting Groom opens her mouth, and the horse tosses her head.

"Woa lass, then! Woa beauty!" says the Groom.

Clumber, who has apparently been absorbed in thought during this colloquy, now addresses Spoker.

"She's rising five; yes, rising five, that's what she is."

"Rising five?" repeats Spoker, inquiringly.

"Rising five," returns Clumber, as though anxious to be most careful and particular on this point.

As I have no means of contradicting this statement, I accept it. Still I can't help thinking that if the mare is really a grandmother (and as far as I can tell I don't see why she shouldn't be), how they must all be laughing at me in their sleeves.

Happy Thought.—To pass my hand over its hind-quarters.

This evidently is a horsey and knowing sort of thing to do, as it seems to interest the Squinter, and makes the horse a trifle restive. I haven't the smallest idea what knowledge of the horse's soundness I am to gain by passing my hand thus over her hind-quarters; but as she herself rather appears to resent it, I am led to ask, dubiously, and quite as if I were on the very brink of discovering her one weak point, "Is she quiet?".

Clumber doesn't seem to have heard my question. Spoker repeats it loudly to him, and Clumber puts his hand to his ear.

"The gentleman asks if she's quiet?" Spoker shouts.

"Quiet?" repeats Clumber, softly—his voice is melancholy and husky—as though he scarcely realised that such a question would have been put by any one in his senses.

Spoker nods.

The Groom takes the opportunity to inform me that Mr. Clumber is "a bit 'ard o 'earin' on one side."

Clumber, having mastered the question, turns to me, and, smiling compassionately, replies, "Quiet! Why a child might drive her!"

Happy Thought.—To inquire whether, as a matter of fact, a child *has* ever driven her. I pass on, however, to another subject. "Any tricks?" I ask, as though she were a conjuror.

Spoker shouts this twice to Clumber. This process gives Clumber time. (By "tricks" I mean, plainly, "Will she kick me off, or have me off somehow, directly I get on, or soon afterwards?")

"Tricks!" exclaims Clumber (always huskily), as surprised as if this were the first time he'd ever heard such a thing even hinted at about a horse of *his*. "Tricks! Not one that I know of. No vice. She's quiet in the stable, ain't she, Tom?"

"As a lamb," replies the Groom, gruffly, squinting all round the horse's head: "you can do anythink a'most with her. I don't think as ever I comed across such another quiet oss as she is. Woa, beauty!"

As the peaceful animal begins at this moment to show signs of restiveness, Clumber, quite equal to the occasion, says,

"Walk her up the road, Tom." Then, as she is led out, with great caution on the part of the diplomatic Tom (I

notice that she goes out of the yard with a nervous jerking back of the head, as if she were expecting some one to hit her over the eye), Clumber explains her impatience to me, reasonably enough, by saying, "You see she's been standing here in the cold some time, and she's a high-couraged horse, she is."

I watch her performance on the road with much interest. The Groom runs with her, and she trots, admirably it seems to me. He runs back with her, and she canters, also admirably, with perhaps just such a hint of kicking up as makes me, standing where I am, feel a trifle nervous about my knees. I generally feel nervousness in my knees. (*Note* for *Typical Developments*. Knees and Nervousness. Their connection. Vol. xix., chap. 8.) Clumber observes that she's a bit fresh now, but there's no vice—none.

"Take her in, Tom," he says.

Tom disappears with her into the stable, and I hear what sounds to me uncommonly like kicking and prancing, and Tom's voice saying, angrily, "Get up, carn't yer!"

I look at Clumber, who doesn't hear these sounds.

Spoker does, and draws his attention to it.

"O," says Clumber, "that's the old grey. She's fidgety in the stable. The little mare's right enough."

We enter the stable, and certainly there is the little mare in the stable "right enough."

To come to the point, I ask what Clumber wants for her. Spoker repeats this to him, when he replies, to Spoker, not to me,—

"Well, I don't quite know as she ain't already sold to

a gentleman in Devonshire, as was very sweet upon her."

Now that there is a chance of *not* getting her, I say, "O, never mind the gentleman in Devonshire," and I at once begin to feel that she is (particularly after all this trouble), just the thing to suit me.

"I'd like to part with her to *you*, Sir," says Clumber, pathetically, "'cos I know as she's sure of a good home."

He evidently doesn't think much of the gentleman in Devonshire. He speaks of her having a "good home" with me as though I should keep her in the drawing-room, and, by implication, that the gentleman in Devonshire would put her out in the dust-hole. I appreciate the compliment to my humanity. In Clumber's eyes I am the merciful man who is merciful to his beast. I am flattered by his preference. Come, let him name his price.

"Well," he says, as if deliberating a nice point, "I can't exactly say *now*, because she don't belong to me altogether, as you may say—she belongs to my Father-in-law, and he won't come back till the day after to-morrow, and I don't quite know what he'd say about it if I'd parted with her while he was away. But," says he, brightening up, and becoming a trifle less husky than usual, "if he don't want to keep her—and he's very fond of the little mare, 'cos she's so gentle with children," (quite touching this: the tender side of Clumber's character)—"I'll let you know the day after to-morrow."

Good. Agreed. *Mem.*—To hear from Clumber; day after to-morrow.

CHAPTER IX.

NEW NOTION—PROFESSIONAL OPINION—TROTT—TROTT'S GIG—A VISIT—THE HATCH—THE FARM—THE OLD COW—THE NEW TUNE—TROTT AND HIS ASSISTANT.

ERY Happy Thought.—To call at Mr. Trott's, the Veterinary Surgeon.

Here's another object for a walk. A variation on Stamps. One day a walk for Stamps; another, walk to Veterinary Surgeon. Awkward word, Veterinary. Can't say it well, without shaking your head.

I can get Trott, who bears the highest character as a Vet (jaunty abbreviation this) and a Dealer, to go and look at Clumber's mare. Trott will tell me if it is "Just the sort o' thing I want."

Mr. Trott, a long man, in tight trousers, hard gloves, and a loose, weather-stained overcoat, is starting, in a lofty gig, for a round of professional calls.

"If you don't object to stepping up here, Sir," he says from the box-seat, "and won't mind my calling at Flipster's Hatch on the road. I'll go on straight to Clumber's afterwards. It'll be all in my way."

I accept, and climb up into the gig.

What strikes me about Trott's gig, is, considering Trott's profession, its remarkable appearance of carelessness.

It has, evidently, seen a great deal of wear and tear. The wear being in the wood part, and the tear in the leather.

Trott's horse—which he drives apparently so negligently, that I've half a mind to ask him whether it wouldn't be as well to hold the reins a little tighter, only that he's a Vet, and *must* know what he's about—is a long-backed, anyhow-jointed animal, slinging along as negligently as Trott drives, with his head straight out in a lolloping way, as if he were over-weighted in the nose. I notice, too, that he moves with an occasional hitch-up of his hind-quarters, reminding me of a stage-sailor's action, when he says, "Ay, ay, Sir!"

Happy Thought.—Evidently an animal for a Horse Marine. Suggest to Trott to send him out to the Gold Coast, as a first instalment towards a Mounted Contingent.

I tell Trott what I want him to do, and he is of opinion that I am quite right to call him in.

"It's worth your while to wait," Mr. Trott says, "and to give a ten-pun' note more for a horse that won't come down on his nose within a week after you've bought him."

Quite so. My sentiments exactly. I say "Yes, as long as I get something that *suits* me, I don't mind a ten-pound note either way." By which *I* mean ten pounds less, if possible.

"Just so," says Mr. Trott.

We turn in at a gate. A tumble-down house, dirty, sloshy road, and dilapidated-looking outbuildings.

Flipster's Hatch.

A boy, in a smock, stands at the horse's head, and Trott, saying he won't be five minutes, gets down, and disappears into a dirty yard.

I suppose this is a Farm. "Flipster's Hatch" as a name is not suggestive of anything in particular, except, perhaps, Chickens. "Colney Hatch," of course, is a Lunatic Asylum, but not all Lunatics are kept under Hatches. There's such a neglected air about the whole place, that I think it must be a Farm in Chancery.

Happy Thought.—Or a "Homestead" when the people are not at home.

A shabby man, with a shirt that ought to have be sent to the wash three days ago, and with a black frock coat, black waistcoat, black tie, and grey trousers, not a bit like a farmer (but more like an undertaker who'd not quite finished dressing), comes out from a side door, and, looking up at me, says,

"Come, and have a look at the Cow."

This takes me so by surprise, that I can't help showing it.

"I beg your pardon. What?"

"Come, and have a look at the Cow."

Perhaps he means this for hospitality. Or perhaps it is something curious which he wishes me, as a visitor, to see.

Not to offend him, I reply, "Thank you, yes, with pleasure."

I like being shown over farms. That is, I like getting up as quickly as possible all the information I can on any subject

whatever. It occurs to me as strange (now I come to think of it) that this is the first time in my life I ever *have* been specially invited to "look at a Cow."

We pick our way (I mean I pick mine, and he trudges) through a very dirty yard (this is evidently not a model farm, where you could "eat your dinner off the floor of a pigstye," as a model farmer once said to me), and come to a low, shed-like sort of stable. A very mucky place.

Happy Thought.—All-Muck's.

I wonder the Drainage Commissioners (or somebody) aren't down on this mucky farmer.

Happy Thought.—Good name for a dirty Scotch Farmer. Mr. Muck Intyre. Don't say this to my companion for several reasons. Firstly, because I think he wouldn't understand it. Secondly, because if he understood it he wouldn't like it. Thirdly, because he, probably, isn't Scotch, and wouldn't care much about it. Fourthly, because if he *is* Scotch, his Highland (or Lowland, or Midland) blood will be up. Fifthly, because he is now drawing my attention to the Cow.

I thought he was going to show me a magnificent Alderney, or a splendid Something-or-other (I forget what other sort of cows there are, and at this moment I can only remember that the Southdowns are sheep not cows), and here I find a dirty-white, fly-bitten, over-sized cow, lying in a loose box on heaps of straw, moaning, blowing, rolling, and, I should say, if I were asked at once what I thought about

her, as mad as a hatter. [How about "Flipster's Hatch" now? Asylum for Lunatic Cows. Why not? Wouldn't vaccination from a Lunatic Cow account for a great deal of —— *Mem. Note this for Typical Developments* under *L. C.*, Vol. XVII.]

The Farmer, or whatever he is (for the more I see of him the less he comes up to my notion of a farmer—then, of course, *my* notion of a farmer may be wrong), goes into the loose box, and regards her with a puzzled expression. I stand at the door, looking in like *Paul Pry*, when he says, "I hope I don't intrude," and my companion says, "I can't make her out."

I don't quite understand at first what it is that he can't make out about her. Whether he means, "Is she a cow or not a cow? Is she mad or sensible?" As a safe course, I observe, with sympathy, "She seems in rather a bad way."

"Yes," he continues, "she is that. We followed out the directions, though: gave her the mashes and the brandy."

"Brandy? When?"

"Why," he replies, as if a little hurt at my question, "as ordered this morning. A pint."

Happy Thought.—Then I can explain the symptoms. The Cow's drunk. Evidently not "Mad as a Hatter," but "Drunk as a Fiddler."

By the way, I must note this (and do now) for *Typical Developments*, Volume something, and see where the subject will fit in. I fancy under "Peculiar Proverbs," or "Social Similes." ("S. S.;" don't think I've done much under the

letter S at present.) Why should certain stigmas be affixed to certain trades?

Query.—Was the first Hatter considered a lunatic by people who, till then, used to go about bare-headed? Just as the inventor of Steam was looked upon as a maniacal visionary, because he thought he could do something a little out of the common with boiling water.

Second Query.—Was the first Fiddler (evidently an object of envy because he played first fiddle) looked upon as inebriated? Perhaps so. I put an instance to myself. Supposing I met Herr Joachim fiddling his very best for the first time—supposing, also, that I'd never seen a fiddle in my life, and suddenly came, in a street, or a wood, or on the sea-shore, on Herr Joachim, hard at work practising for a concert that evening, what would be my opinion of Herr Joachim's condition? I think I should be, at first sight, inclined to take a Policeman's view of the matter, and say: Drunk and Disorderly. Very good. Then, supposing this to have happened any number of thousand years ago, this would be crystallised (good word this) into a proverb, which would naturally come to be "Drunk as a Fiddler."

Of course I select Herr Joachim as the present distinguished representative of the height of good fiddling.

Then, while on the subject, I might make a series of similes for trade and professional purposes: thus, Mad as a Hatter, Drunk as a fiddler, Comic as a Cobbler, Mild as a Milkman, Bold as as a Baker, Short as a Shoemaker (short referring to his temper), Terrible as a Tanner, Fierce as a Photographer, Charitable as a Chandler.

For "Drunk as a Fiddler," I would substitute, alliteratively, "Tight as a Trombone-player," or would supplement it, without the alliteration, with "Screwed as a Flautist."

The Sort-of-Farmer notices me making notes. "You're writing a prescription?" he asks.

"A prescription? No. What for?"

"O, I thought you might be. Your Guv'nor gave us one t'other morning, an' I was going to tell you as 'twarn't hardly of no use." Here Mr. Trott steps up.

"Your young man don't seem to make much out of the old cow," says the Sort-of-Farmer.

He has mistaken me for Mr. Trott's assistant.

The error being explained, the man only laughs, doesn't apologise, and says, "I thought he didn't seem to know much about a Cow."

Whereat Mr. Trott smiles too.

Now, here would be a first-rate opportunity for a repartee, and I should make it, if I didn't, luckily, look well ahead, and realise what *he'd* say in reply. In one flash of thought I figure to myself the dialogue thus:—

Farmer (*jeeringly*). You don't know much about Cows?

Myself (*pointedly*). No; I know more about Donkeys.

[*Meaning, that I know him, the Farmer, to be a Donkey.*]

Farmer. Ah! I should ha' thought as that was more in your line.

And what could I reply to this? There ends the repartee. You can't have anything after this. It would be an anti-climax. Consequently, as it stands, the Farmer would get

the best of it, which is not my idea of a repartee exercise with a farmer.

I *must* bring out a work on repartees. It will "supply a want."

Trott, it seems, is calling, professionally, on the Cows.

CHAPTER X.

CONFIDENTIAL—TROTT'S IDEA—MIND AND BODY—COWS AND CHICKENS—A SMILE—A NEW DEGREE—SHORT NECKED—TROTT'S OPINIONS—ARRIVAL.

UDDENLY to Trott, when we are once more in the gig: "Now, what *is* the matter with that Cow?"

I put this to him confidentially, as much as to say, "Look here. Now I'm driving about with you I'm one of yourselves; and, *entre nous*, though you told Flipster something about that Cow, you didn't tell him everything. Now then, Trott, my boy, out with it, and mum's the word."

I think he is taken with my confidential air, as he inclines his head sideway, still keeping his eye in a negligent sort of way on the careless mare, and, without turning to me, he replies in a whisper,

"Well, Sir, my idea is that it's apoplexy."

I look at him to see if he's joking. I am prepared to laugh if he is, and am ready to say "Indeed!" quite seriously, if he isn't.

He is *not* joking. When he says "Apoplexy" he means apoplexy.

How one's mind can be enlarged in a single morning! in-

deed, in a minute! (This subject alone, I note down, ought to occupy a volume; *i.e.*, *On Enlargement of Mind.* Also considered physically. Connection between mind and body, *i.e.*, big mind, big body. Cardinal Wolsey an instance. He had a large mind; then *vide* Shakespeare:

"He was a man of an unbounded stomach."—*Henry VIII.*

Think it out.)

Till now I had associated apoplexy only with red-faced old gentlemen of the last century, who would over-eat themselves regularly, take their three bottles of fine old port every night, and then, one evening, suddenly disappear under the dining-room table in a fit of apoplexy.

Happy Thought.—Quite the idea, in verse,

The Fine Old English Gentleman
All of the apoplectic time.

But as to a Cow being liable to such an attack, such an idea had never entered my head. I should as soon have thought of a Cow having the Chicken-pox.

Being in the vein for this sort of thing this morning [Note down *Happy Thought.*—When ought one to write for *The Lancet?* Answer—When you're "in the vein." Arrange this.] I ask Trott, "Can a Cow have the Chicken-pox?"

"Well," says Trott, deliberately, and for a second taking his eyes off the horse to look at me, only without turning his head—a movement of which the careless animal seems perfectly aware, as he takes that opportunity of making such a stumble as very nearly brings him down, whereupon I in-

terrupt Trott, to say, in a surprised tone, "Hulloa!" to intimate that Trott ought really to hold his reins tighter. He doesn't, however; he only says,

"She's all right: never came down yet, and never will. It's a slouchy way she has, but she's as safe as the Bank. You were saying, Sir, about a Cow having the Chicken-pox. Well, I s'pose you've heard of the Cow-pock?"

Of course I have; but, at this minute, I can't recollect when or where, or how, or in connection with what. I *have* heard of it, and so I reply to Trott, as though a new light had broken in upon me, "O, that's it, is it?"

"That's it," says Mr. Trott, drily. He looks so straight before him at the careless horse's ears, that I cannot see whether he is slightly smiling, or not.

If smiling, why does he smile?

I know, and at the same time I arrive at the reason of his comparative reticence on the subject of animals and their peculiarities. This branch of knowledge is his stock-in-trade, to gain which he has had to attend Horsey, Cowy, and Piggy Lectures, to pass an examination, and come out with a degree.

Happy Thought.—"B.A."—Bachelor of Animals.

Or, if not with a degree, with a Diploma. Well, all this has cost him money, and, evidently, why should he give me, *gratis*, because I'm riding in a gig with him, such information on Horses, Cows, and other quadrupeds, as would enable me (after one drive with him, with a note-book and a good memory) to set up as a Vet in a small way myself?

Of course he won't.

Could I expect a Solicitor to *give* me his opinion? Wouldn't he be justified in replying, "No, my dear friend, if you are in want of six-and-eightpence, here it is, but I keep my opinion to myself." Could I expect a Barrister to give me the benefit of his experience? or a Doctor?

No, I am convinced that questions, put to a professional man, in a friendly and confidential way, on purely professional matters, are unfair.

Though, for the above-mentioned reasons, which I fairly think out to myself as we drive along, I am going to drop the subject, yet I can't help inquiring,—

"Is it only short-necked animals that are subject to apoplexy?"

I feel that it *is* an unfair question for *me* to put, as it really might have been one of the chief tests in Mr. Trott's examination papers when he was a Veterinary Student.

Giving the loose reins a slight check, he returns,—

"Short-necked, or short-horned?"

Short-necked, I meant; but if I'm wrong——

"Yes," he says, "all short-necked 'uns—Bulls, Cows, and Sheep."

Happy Thought.—Not Giraffes, then? They're well out of the way of apoplexy.

I suggest this to Mr. Trott, who seems to look at me sideways for a second, and then, distinctly, smiles, as if this were something new to him.

After all, he has not lost by his information, as I've pre-

sented him with an idea, of which he can make what use he pleases. On it he might build up a Theory, on the Theory a Practice; then call at the Zoological Gardens, mention Giraffes and apoplexy before a Committee Meeting, and be elected Special Surgeon and Medical Attendant-in-Chief to the Zoological Collection. Then there would be an additional attraction besides "Feeding Time," which might be (well advertised) "Medicine Time."

However, the point now is to talk about Clumber and his horse before we get to Clumber's.

"Clumber's honest and straightforward," says Trott; "I've never heard anything against him." He admits so much, as though there might be something, *not* to Clumber's advantage, which had not, as yet, reached his (Trott's) ears.

"But," continues Mr. Trott, "when it's about a horse I wouldn't trust my own father."

"That's why I called you in," I say, complimenting Mr. Trott's professional skill and my own cleverness. Connecting my answer with Trott's previous observation, I am aware that I seem to represent Clumber as my father, or something like it.

"You're quite right, Sir," says Trott. "What does he want for it?"

"Forty, I think—at least, judging from what Mr. Spoker said."

"Um!" says Mr. Trott. "If he's a good 'un, at that price it's a bargain. If he ain't, there must be something precious queer about him, and it 'ud be a dead loss of the money, besides danger to life and limb."

"Quite so." My sentiments to a turn.

"Does Clumber expect me?" asks Mr. Trott.

"No, he doesn't." Mr. Trott smiles. "The fact is," I go on, "it only occurred to me to come to you about it this morning."

I am about to, what the lawyers call, "spring" Trott on Clumber. Here we are.

CHAPTER XI.

CHEZ CLUMBER—DEAFNESS—BUSINESS—TITLE PRICE—FAILURE—SQUINTING TOM—SPOKER—MY TRIAL—OVER—RESOLUTION.

EALLY, Clumber is astonished to see Trott. Trott is cheery and good-humoured with Clumber, who, however, eyes him sulkily.

[We are now as the French say *chez Clumber;* we've just been, as the cockneys say, "*Shay* Trott."]

Unusually deaf, too, Clumber appears to be this morning. If he'd only seen us over his wire window-blind, and hadn't been standing at his own door, he'd have gone up to his bedroom and sent the squinting Ostler to say "Not at home."

But we caught him.

I am sure he is now meditating his line of conduct:—

First. Shall he say the horse isn't in?

Secondly. Shall he say his Father-in-law won't part with it?

Thirdly. Or that the "gentleman in Devonshire who's been sweet on her this ever so long" has written to say that he'll have her for seventy down?

Fourthly. Shall he put up the price?

This occupies his mind while he is putting his hand up to his ear, and shaking his head, to imply that he can't make out what I'm saying.

What I have been saying is, simply, "Here we are about the horse."

Of course he ought to know, at once, what we've come for. He *does*.

He decides on risking it, and orders Squinting Tom—[*Happy Thought.*—Good title for something—*Squinting Tom of Coventry*. Note for Christmas Book]—to "fetch out the little mare."

"Fine morning, Mr. Clumber," says Trott, pleasantly.

"Hey?" returns Clumber, putting his hand to his right ear.

Trott takes the hint, goes round Clumber, and arrives at his left ear.

Good idea this of Trott's. Can't both be deaf.

This strategic movement so takes Clumber by surprise that when Trott says, always most pleasantly,

"We've come over to have a look at this little mare of yours," Clumber replies instantly,

"Ah, yes. Well you'll like her. She's first-rate."

Another notion has now evidently struck Clumber. It is, as a sort of

Happy Thought.—Get the better of Trott somehow.

Clumber brightens up.

"You've had a longish drive," he says. "Won't you take

something? Give you a first-rate glass of—um—um—beer."

If Clumber's idea is that every man has his price, and that Trott's price is beer, he has clearly mistaken his man.

Perhaps his first notion was a five-pun' note. Then, perhaps, the chance of his being sold himself by a brother in the trade flashed across him, and he substituted *in his mind* the offer of "a glass of wine," which would be generous, hospitable, friendly, and might, if strong port, obfuscate Trott. Then it clearly occurred to him that, for purposes of obfuscation, beer would do as well, and would save expense. And so, through indecision and stinginess, Clumber has failed.

The Horse is brought out by Squinting Tom, who stands, as usual, at her head, looking about in all directions at once.

Spoker, in his apron and shirt-sleeves, looks in from next door. He enters cheerily, prepared to feel sure to congratulate me on my purchase, and, when I've gone, to say to Clumber, "Well, I helped you to sell the horse. You'd never ha' done it without me. How much?" And then there would, probably, have been a row.

Spoker's smile subsides when he sees Trott. Spoker looks at Clumber, but Clumber won't acknowledge his presence, which, I see, discourages Spoker considerably.

Clumber rubs his chin, and eyes Trott's proceedings. So do I.

For *me* that is quite a lesson in horse examination; and, by observing Trott, and asking a few questions, I shall be

able to know what to do next time by myself, without Trott's assistance.

First, Trott is stern with the Ostler. "Stand him on level ground, my man," says Trott, roughly.

Ostler, evidently having failed in his first attempt at deception, whatever it may have been, humbly obeys.

"A little more forward into the light, my man," says Trott, almost savagely.

The way he says "my man," must be most irritating to the Squinting Ostler. I'm sure Clumber doesn't like it.

Trott eyes her all over; stands in front of her, displacing the Ostler for a minute, and looks along her sides, from the nose, as a starting point of view, apparently to see if she's straight.

I am just about to ask him, "What do you do that for?" when it occurs to me that, if I do, it will seem as though I differed from him as to his method, and this would bring in Clumber & Co., who would all say, jeeringly, "Ah, yes! what do you do that for?"

Happy Thought.—Ask him afterwards—all alone, privately. *Note in Mem. Book.*—"Why did he do *that?*"

Trott opens her mouth, and takes a searching look at her teeth. He, evidently, as a doctor, has an eye, too, for her tongue. Trott knows what he's about. Glad I brought Trott.

Then he takes off his hat, and shades the mare's left eye with it, and he repeats the operation on the right eye. He inspects both eyes carefully.

Odd! I should never have thought of this. Perhaps the animal is blind as a bat, or going blind.

Trott doesn't speak to anyone.

Solemn moment. "Waiting for the Verdict."

He feels the legs, he examines the knees. He lifts up the feet, fore and hind (dangerous part of his business this), and, after passing his hand over her quarters (I think they're called "quarters," but, arithmetically, they occupy a third of the horse from his tail to the beginning of the fall in his back), he whispers to me, mysteriously, what sounds like "Splinter—off—fore."

I *am* glad I brought Trott.

How should *I* have found out that she had got a splinter in her off fore-leg? I've had a splinter in my hand before now, and it's very painful. In one's leg it would most likely cause lameness. How did she get it? By falling against a gate, or against some wood in the stable, or an unfinished shaft in harness?

Mem.—Ask him afterwards.

"Run her out," says Trott.

She goes through these performances, and then Trott says to me—

"Would you like to throw your leg over her?"

I understand him to mean, would I like to ride her? Well—um—yes—only, I remember, I haven't ridden for three years; and I say—"I haven't come prepared for riding." By this I mean that I am not in cords and boots.

"Better," says Mr. Trott; "just to see if she satisfies you."

It looks so absurd for a man, who has come to buy a horse for riding and driving, *not* to try her *by* riding *and* driving her, that I accept. With a sporting air, I say, carelessly, "Very well. I'll just chuck my leg over her."

Feel in a cold shiver. When I am "chucking my leg over her," I wonder what *she*'ll do? Horses are such intelligent creatures that, by the time I've been on two minutes, she'll be sure to discover that I haven't ridden for three years.

Wish I could withdraw.

I say to Clumber, in a tone implying contemptuous indifference for anything any horse may attempt with *me*, "She's quite quiet, eh?"

"Quite," says Clumber, who is beginning to have a better opinion of Trott.

Happy Thought.—To ask Trott, quickly and privately, "What's the good of my riding her, if she's got a splinter in her off fore-leg or foot?"

Trott replies, "Why, if she suits you in every other respect, I shouldn't think much of *that*."

Ah! but I do.

Here she is, saddled. Usual difficulty about stirrups. Always seems, whenever I get into a fresh saddle, that a Life Guardsman has been using it just before me. After some alterations I say it's "All right." At least, as "all right" as I shall be for the next ten minutes.

Happy Thought.—Walk her at first.

Must try her walk as well as any other pace. On the whole, *walking* is what I should be most particular about in a horse. She walks well. Somehow, she seems to have got a long and loose neck, that goes up and down, and she has a way of looking from side to side, as though, when I'm off my guard, she intended doing something that would rather surprise me.

Happy Thought.—Sit tight. Don't be "off my guard."

Clumber, Trott, Spoker, and Ostler are standing at stable-door, watching me.

Wonder what they're saying?

Should imagine it not complimentary.

Must try a trot.

Now, how to get her into a trot without hitting her with the whip they've given me which would only make her irritable—or, without touching her "quarters," which might make her kick, and then Clumber & Co. would see me come off, or very nearly,—or without saying "tchk" to her, which might startle her.

I give her her head. She makes use of it to stretch her neck, as if she were stretching out her chin and pooh-poohing me, and she only walks more leisurely.

I *must* touch her with the whip.

Now, then. I must stick my knees in firmly, feel that I'm like a rock in the saddle, and then touch her—very gently.

I do; and am prepared for rearing, kicking, shying—anything.

Not a bit. She takes no notice of it.

Becoming bolder, I do it again—harder.

No; she doesn't feel it.

Suppose I . . . I tremble at the thought . . . considering I haven't ridden for three years—suppose I . . . hit her on the hind quarters?

I sit firmer than ever, brace myself for an effort, and, imagining that the result will be to find myself, the next moment, flying among the branches of the trees, I hit her—very gently, and, so to speak, slily.

No effect.

Oho! *Now* I don't mind increasing the force. Another. Another, harder. Without any kick, or rearing, she simply throws up her head, and *suddenly*, trots.

All my rock-like firmness is shaken out of my knees at the first movement, and the stirrups seem to have let themselves out a good half-inch. Nearly off sideways, but recover myself somehow.

From this she goes into a canter. I seem to roll a good deal in the saddle, and I should say Clumber & Co.'s view of me would be absurd. The saddle appears to slide forward, and there is nothing of the horse in front of me. I can only describe the sensation by saying that it seems to me, that, should the horse like to double itself up from the front, it could slip its fore-legs through its own girths, and get away from under its own saddle, leaving me on it on the road, as easily as possible.

Happy Thought.—Sort of Davenport-Brother Horse. Good trick for a circus.

We stop; and turn. I should like to walk slowly back. Horse will trot now, and it's down hill to the stable.

Happy Thought.—As I cannot stop him without jerking his head, and perhaps spoiling his mouth (which Clumber won't like if I don't buy him), I yield and endeavour to look as though I were still trying him.

Really he,—I mean she,—*she* is trying me.

The trial is over, except that Trott gets up, and puts her through her paces.

Verdict to be pronounced, in Clumber's absence. Trott advises me *not*. I agree with Trott. Sorry for Clumber. I don't think I care about riding as I used to. I shall go in for driving only.

CHAPTER XII.

VISITORS—THE UNKNOWN—HIS NOSE—PULLINGER—PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY—NO ROOM—LEFT SITTING.

AUNTERING home after this Horse trial which has ended in my giving up Clumber, Spoker, and Co., and in Trott's promising to send me word directly he sees anything likely to suit me, I find at the garden-gate a carriage full of people. Three Ladies and a Clergyman. Accompanying them, and evidently as a detachment of the party, are a tall gentleman and a young lady on horseback.

Doddridge, the melancholy Doddridge, is evidently explaining to them that there's nobody at home when I arrive.

The Clergyman, seeing me, raises his hat. He is a brown-faced man with a big nose. His nose strikes me at once as something I've seen before, and having been once seen, not to be easily forgotten. It's a nose that he seems to use as he would his index finger, to emphasize his remarks with. Every movement of his head is in his nose, and I am sure that, if his arguments have any force in the pulpit, it must be from the logical character of his nose. His nose, starting from between the eyebrows, leads you along a clearly

defined line over a difficulty (the bridge), and then brings you to *the* point, and then an end, artistically.

"Hallo!" he says, cheerily, "You don't recollect me."

"I smile on him. I ought to recollect him. I *do* recollect. No, I *don't* recollect him. And yet that nose.

"My name's Pullinger," he says.

The three ladies in the carriage and the two equestrians are much interested. I feel that all eyes are on me to see what I make of Pullinger.

It flashes across me suddenly, "Supposing I won't call to mind a trace of Pullinger, and reply, sternly, 'No, Sir, I do not remember you,' what would be the result? Would they turn him out of the carriage? Would they give him up there and then as an imposter, whose social existence had to this moment simply depended upon my recognising him as Pullinger?"

But I do remember him now. I recall his features gradually, beginning with *the* feature, and I say, "Why, so it is! Pullinger of course. I was sure I knew your face." I mean nose, but I don't say so.

I go on, "You've altered so much since I last saw you." If I put this as it really occurs to me at the moment, I should say, "Your nose has grown so tremendously I should hardly have known you again."

Won't he come in, and his friends in the carriage, and his friends on horses? They look at one another dubiously, as if there were something to pay for admission.

They seem to settle it, tacitly, among themselves, with a sort of rather patronising air, as if implying, "Well, you know,

we don't commit ourselves to anything by going in. Pullinger is a Clergyman, and *he* says he knows all about it. At all events, if we don't like it, we can come out again."

The Mounted Gentleman calls out, "What shall we do with the horses?" as if he expected *me* to hold them.

There's such a condescensional air about the whole party, that I am really inclined to answer the mounted visitor carelessly, and say, "What'll you do with your horses? O, let 'em run about. You won't lose 'em, and, if you do, there's more where they came from."

Happy Thought (*for Proverb*).—Better horses in the stable than ever came out of it. (To be arranged for my *New Proverbial Philosophy Book*.)

I tell Doddridge, who is surveying the scene with a funereal aspect, to summon the Gardener. She sighs, as though this were the last straw which would break her back, and goes off resignedly for the Gardener, who will hold the horses.

The weak part of our cottage is our drawing-room. It *is* small, and we are always apologising for it.

I generally explain that "I 'm going to build a new wing," only the plans are not finished, or the estimates are not ready, or the something or the other isn't done, which simply means that, all things considered, my Aunt and I do not see the necessity of an outlay on the drawing-room.

As Chilvern, the Architect, whom I *did* consult on the matter, said, "You see in enlarging an ordinary room, it's different to making a concert-hall or a theatre hold more

people. In such cases, more people more money, and it repays you. But you don't want that."

He is right: we don't. But, at present, five ladies in our drawing-room, if they don't sit quite still, are really a crowd.

Consequently, by the time Pullinger and the three ladies, and the two dismounted visitors, are arranged somehow about the apartment, there's hardly any room for me, unless I sit on the piano.

Another curious fact about my Aunt's arrangements is, that whatever the number of visitors in the drawing-room, we are always one chair short. To make up this deficiency, there is generally a search all over the house, which results in the ugliest, oldest, and most eccentric-looking chair being brought down by Doddridge, who takes a melancholy pleasure in appearing with it among the company.

Till this comes I have to stand up, which is awkward.

On this present occasion the chair which Doddridge brings is a very peculiar uncomfortable-looking chair, with narrow sides (like an old-fashioned Hall-porter's chair), and a tall, oval back, made of cane and straw twisted together as compactly as a bee-hive.

Happy Thought.—If an artist wanted to draw a picture for the *Illustrated London News* of "Granny Knitting," *this* is the sort of chair he would place her in.

We are all seated, smiling. I am waiting for introductions. Pullinger having introduced himself, seems to have suddenly come to a stand-still, or a sit-still.

As a commencement he says—

"Well, and how have you been this long time?"

The others (I don't as yet know who they are) are listening, like a Committee, to my answer to the first interrogatory.

Happy Thought.—"Left sitting." Like a Hen.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE VISITORS—THE UNINTRODUCED ONE—ARRIVAL OF AN ANIMAL TO SUIT ME—EXCITEMENT.

N our small drawing-room. The Three Ladies, my old friend the Rev. W. Pullinger, myself, a Young Lady in a Riding-habit, and the tall dismounted Visitor, who, not being able to get a chair, politely declares that he "rather prefers standing." Queer taste: bolt upright in a corner. Politeness, like virtue, is its own reward.

Previous to the introductions, which must follow of course, I find myself taking it for granted that the Dismounted Visitor is the father of the Young Lady in the Riding-habit. That there is not the slightest resemblance between them, I should be ready to admit; but I suppose it's the fact of their both having come on horseback which has suggested, and, by this time, really fixed the idea in my mind.

After Pullinger has asked me "How I've been this long time"—(to which question a precise answer would require a review of my physical condition for the past ten or twelve years, with corroborative evidence from my medical man's ledger, which, of course, would take some time to obtain, and

a general summing up)—and I have answered, that, taking me altogether (that is, not in isolated details), "I've been very well," the conversation seems to flag, until it occurs to me, not as something brilliant, but at least a return for polite enquiries, and, in any case, less depressing than silence, to ask him with a sort of tender heartiness—

"And how have *you* been?"

The Four Ladies and the Dismounted Visitor are watching this scene with, apparently, as much interest as though it were the keenest encounter between two of the greatest wits of the day.

"Well," replies Pullinger, in a confident tone, "I've been —married."

Hereat the Ladies all smile. So does the Dismounted Visitor, and nods approvingly. I notice that he only stands on one leg at a time: keeping the other in reserve like a stork. At this point, which he evidently puts down as scoring one to Pullinger (the state of the game being, Pullinger "one" to my "nothing"), he relieves guard with his left leg, which comes on duty while the right leg retires for a little temporary relaxation.

Happy Thought, on hearing of Pullinger's having been married, to say, "Indeed! I am glad of it!" because the Ladies are present, and one of them is, probably, Mrs. Pullinger.

It now occurs to Pullinger that the time has arrived when he will introduce his Ladies. The first Lady is all black velvet and Astrachan, and wears a veil, which, reaching to the

tip of her nose, discovers the gleam of a pair of eyes which must be very brilliant, as they, even now, appear like bright lights behind a wire-gauze blind. But this, with the exception of the mouth and chin, is all I can see of her. It is Mrs. Pullinger. The next Lady he introduces as Miss—I think he says—Ozlewum, or some name like that, but he is so indistinct I can't catch it; while the third Lady he says is "My cousin, Miss (Something or other)," and again I can *not* understand him. He explains that "Mr." (another name I can't catch as we bow politely) is the gentleman with whom he is staying now, about five miles from us, and the Mr. ——

Happy Thought.—Mr. X.—"an unknown quantity."

Then Mr. X. says he hopes "I'll make a call upon *him.*"

This gives a sudden turn to the conversation; and so it happens that the Young Lady in the Riding-habit is not introduced at all.

We talk of the county, of the weather, of the shooting, of the fishing, of croquet, of the neighbours, in a jerky and forced manner, but the Young Lady in the Riding-habit is never appealed to, is never asked a question, never corroborates, never starts a subject; never, in short, speaks. I try to lug her in occasionally, in order that she may tell me who she is. She is very blue-eyed, pale-haired, with a childish-looking face, and a vague smile. I mention, in order to interest her, that I am in search of a horse. She bows, and looks pleased, but says nothing. Perhaps she would

have spoken if it hadn't been for Mr. X., who professes to know "something about a horse," he says, "when he sees one."

Happy Thought.—As he isn't seeing one now, of course he knows nothing at all on the subject at this moment.

I don't say this, as it might be thought rude to a strange visitor. The conversation is drying up, because it is so difficult for me, in the centre, to talk all round, specially when I have to trust to catching their eyes in order that, as I haven't got an idea of their names, each one may know when I am addressing her or him. Another difficulty is, that I can't allude to them in speaking to Pullinger.

Happy Thought.—When a party of strangers is taken to make a call in the country, wouldn't it be better if each one brought his or her card into the drawing-room, and presented it personally? How simple.

I can only speak of them to Pullinger and his half-veiled wife as "Your friends." "Won't your friends take a glass of sherry?" "Won't your friend" (the Dismounted Visitor) "take a biscuit?" and so forth.

The Dismounted Man will take a biscuit and a glass of sherry.

Doddridge is summoned.

"Very sorry," she replies, "but Mistress 'as gone out, and took the keys."

A blow. Very awkward, and looks so absurd. If they'd only stuck to their refusal this wouldn't have happened.

Doddridge having been thus brought on to the scene, is not going to have her part cut down ; she continues—

"You see, Ma'am," addressing Mrs. Pullinger, "Mistress don't expect visitors as a rule, and she seldom goes out herself, but always do carry the keys, and so she never give it a thought to say to me, 'Here's the bunch,' before Mistress went out this morning."

I *do* wish the old idiot would go away. What an extraordinary household Pullinger will think ours. But I'm afraid of interfering with her. She has already called me Master George, and has begun to tell them how she recollects me from a boy, and what sort of a boy I was, and what a good Aunt my Aunt has been to me, and how I ought always to take care of my excellent relative (implying, as it were, that I generally locked her up in a room and beat her), and how (seeing her audience enjoying it, and thinking that I do too, because I am obliged to smile—confound it!) she remembers me, on the eventful day when I gave up petticoats and was fitted by my first tailor, and how I used to fight and kick *her* (Doddridge), with many other pleasant and interesting anecdotes, which would go on (I feel sure) for another hour —Doddridge being "i' the vein" and having quite an exceptional field-day of it—if it had not been that the front gate bell suddenly rings, whereupon she disappears, and (as I expected) the visitors rise, with many apologies for detaining me so long from my work [they have heard about my being engaged on the compilation of *Typical Developments*], and commence quitting the room in a sort of procession, with much the air of relief that would be exhibited by well-bred

people on getting away from an amateur pianofortist, who has been giving his services for a charitable object.

Doddridge returns. "O, Sir, why it's another horse come to the gate."

Some one has brought a horse to show me.

Pullinger says, "That's lucky, as we can all have a look at him."

It gives them an excuse for getting out of the house quietly. I feel that they'll never pay me another visit.

The horse is in the lane, so Doddridge says.

Some loafing, do-nothing labourers, and some very dirty children, are in the lane too. Lounging, laughing coarsely, and staring rudely. What a scene for visitors!

There's quite a crowd to see the new horse.

I look up the lane for the animal, but only see my Aunt in the distance. She is arriving, and I now see her digging the Coachman in the ribs with her parasol, and urging him to increase his speed, under the impression that this unwonted crowd signifies a fire or some dreadful accident to me. Commotion!

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HORSE AT THE FRONT GATE—ON VIEW—MR. JARVIS—HIS LEGS—DIGRESSIONS AND NOTES—INTERVIEW PROCEEDING.

RANKLY, I don't wonder at there being a crowd to see this horse.

To begin with, it isn't a horse—that is, I mean it's a cob.

Its head appears to me to be too large for its neck, and, as it stands still, it has a way of moving its ears unevenly, on a sort of one-down-t'other-come-up principle, which suggests interior mechanism (it being what you'd expect in a toy, with strings, some wires, and a musical baker's cart behind), and inspires mistrust.

The animal's neck, too, tracing him thus backwards, seems to my eye to be indented, though, perhaps, on reflection, this effect is simply due to the mane having been cut by an inexperienced hand. As to the hair of this mane, I never saw anything so rusty-looking, dry, and untidy. Reverting to the toy, if the mane had been nailed on carelessly, it couldn't have looked worse.

Carrying my eye along him downwards—we are all examining him now, as my Aunt has descended from her fly, and I have introduced her to Mr. and Mrs. Pullinger, but

have been totally unable to introduce the rest of the party, whose names I haven't been able to catch——

[*Happy Thought.*—"Who shall be nameless." This seems to be a quotation out of something, occurring to me at the moment. Make a note of it, and look it out afterwards.]

——and to whom, therefore, my Aunt inclines herself somewhat stiffly.

The person who has brought this animal "for me to see" is a tall man with a short body, and such very long jerky sort of legs, as to have the appearance of being only loosely attached to his waist, perhaps supported to the division line in the old-fashioned way in which a school-boy's lower half used to be fastened, with evident buttons all round, to his upper half. It is not a division of halves in this man's case, but—(*Happy Thought*)—putting him as a sum in proportion one-fifth is to the whole, as his legs to his body; that is—

One-fifth : *whole* : : *legs* : *body*. Algebraically, and evidently,

One-fifth (*body*) = *whole* (*legs*).

This might be called a sum in anatomy. [Note it down, and see if something systematic and scientific can't be got out of it, when I've leisure.]

Mr. Jarvis's legs—Jarvis, he informs me is his name, and I see no reason, judging from his personal appearance, to doubt him, no more than I do his statement that he is landlord of the *Wig and Chicken* in the next village—Mr. Jarvis's Legs——

[Capital title for Christmas Number of a Serial. *Mr. Jarvis's Legs.* Subject to be divided into His Stockings, his Boots, his Slippers, his Pantaloons, and so forth by popular authors, every story sensational, with a picture of Mr. Jarvis's legs on the cover—(*Happy Thought*)—write to Popgood and Groolly, Publishers, and propose it]——

Mr. Jarvis's legs are obtrusive and kick out, independent, I am convinced, of the Jarvis above, who has nothing to do with them ; in fact, his head's too far off, and too far back, to trouble itself about looking after such mundane matters as feet and legs ; and, as he advances towards me, legs first, he realises just half the notion of *Old Joe's* action in the once popular nigger ballad where he (*Ole Joe*) was described as "kicking up ahind and afore." Mr. Jarvis kicks up "afore."

He wears a gay-looking straw-hat, after a rather nautical fashion. In fact, taking merely his head, whiskers, and hat, and seeing just so much of him as would be visible in bed if he had a bad cold and were obliged to keep his shoulders covered, I should say, "This man is a sailor."

Bringing him a little way out of bed, convalescent, and making him sit up with his check coat on, I should say, "This man is a sportsman."

But producing him, entirely, with the independent legs in tight trousers, and ending in long-toed boots, I should say, "This man has a betting-book in his pocket, and *he* knows more than meets the eye about two to one, bar one."

Summing him up altogether, I am inclined to regard Mr. Jarvis with suspicion. But by this time I should regard any

one who came to sell me a horse, even my own Grandfather, with suspicion.

By the way, talking of my Grandfather, I'm not sure that *he* wouldn't have done me, if he had had the chance, though I venerate his memory. I have a reason for saying this. A man once said, in my hearing, "Ah, Old So-and-So! I remember him! He *was* a rum customer, and a regular wicked old sinner."

"Sir!" said I, warmly, "you are talking of my Grandfather. Prove your statement, Sir, or——"

Well, he *did* prove his statement; at least, he told me such a story of my Grandfather's conduct, on one particular occasion, as thrilled me with horror, and his facts were corroborated by a friend of his who was present. However, this is a family anecdote, and only mentioned here to show that you can't always trust even your own Grandfather.

Happy Thought.—But, if you could, why should there be an actual practical prohibition in the Prayer Book against the enormity of marrying your Grandfather? If the compilers of that excellent devotional work had not contemplated (perhaps from experience) the wickedness of a sly old Grandfather (*Grandfather Don Juan*—sort of name for a Pantomime), they would never have placed such a prohibition on record.

But to proceed. The above being merely notes, made (saving Mr. Jarvis's presence and the crowd) while they think I am taking down Mr. J.'s address and the points of the horse.

Now then.

"There's a little 'orse," Mr. Jarvis commences, "as you won't often see."

No; once is enough. But I keep this to myself. My Aunt, Pullinger, and party all attention. They think I'm going to be taken in by Jarvis.

I brace myself for the encounter. I'm for the prosecution: Jarvis for the defence: the Horse is the criminal: visitors the Jury: crowd in the lane represents the public in court.

I commence by shaking my head.

This means, generally, that I don't like the animal, taken as an animal altogether; though of course I don't know how he'd suit me in parts.

The next move is Mr. Jarvis's.

CHAPTER XV.

STILL ENGAGED WITH MR. JARVIS ABOUT THE HORSE.

HERE seems to me to be an air of depression about the cob. Perhaps he's shy, and doesn't like being exhibited in the public road.

Jarvis's legs form an isosceles triangle (on their own account, *he* having nothing to do with it), his hands thrust themselves (under Jarvis's direction here, as being nearer the head) into his trowsers pockets, so as to rumple up the waistcoat on each side, and Jarvis's head drops down towards the left shoulder, as though there were a strong wind blowing at his right ear. He looks critical: he looks knowing. In spite of his nautical straw hat, he has nothing whatever of the sailor about him now. Even his whiskers, which, under another aspect, *did* convey something of the mariner to my mind, now suggest more of the Barrister.

Imagine at this moment Jarvis in a white wig and bands, and his photograph would do for ten out of fifteen barristers. He has no moustache; and I do not believe in a Barrister with a moustache. I don't think that moustachios should be worn by either Barristers, Anglican Clergymen, or Milk-

men. This, however, has nothing to do with horse-dealing.

Feeling that it is *his* turn to move in the game, Jarvis says, repeating himself to begin with,

"Yes, you won't see such a little 'orse as that every day. Reg'lar good plucked 'un."

Happy Thought.—A reg'lar good "plucked 'un" must mean that the animal has failed in passing a veterinary examination.

As Jarvis wouldn't understand this joke, and as (besides Pullinger, who's a Clergyman, and mightn't like joking) there's only one gentleman (the Equestrian Visitor) present who may, or may not, be up to it, I decide upon not risking it. Shall note it down, and arrange it for one of Sydney Smith's good things. *Then* people will say, "How witty! so like him!"

The Tall Equestrian, who cannot possibly be interested in my being taken in and done for by Jarvis or any other horse-dealer, observes gratuitously,

"Yes! he's not a bad stamp of animal."

Whereat the Ladies appear interested.

Now what does he mean by a "bad stamp"? If he were a bad stamp he wouldn't evidently be worth a penny. But that he should be only "*not* a bad stamp" doesn't seem to imply that he is a *good* stamp, but is very nearly being a good stamp. It's as if you said of a bottle of spurious *Eau de Cologne*, "Yes, that's Eau de Cologne, only it's not *Jean Maria Farina*."

As the Equestrian Visitor appears to know something about the matter, and as Jarvis has at once seen (I catch his eye) the importance of enlisting such respectable and unprejudiced evidence on his own side, I feel bound to ask the last speaker, "What he means by that observation?"

"Well," he replies, "it's a good serviceable beast. It's what I should call a good slave for the country."

Oho! Then we're not horse-dealing, we're slave-dealing.

I reply, "Ah, I see what you mean," and I think I shall, presently.

Mr. Jarvis seizes the opportunity.

"Ah, he's all that, and more. He'll do his thirteen mile an hour easy, in a level country. I've taken him to Scragford, round by Hillfield, and back, in a day, with a waggonette full."

He takes for granted that we know the country. The Tall Equestrian does, or pretends to, and says, "stiff work."

"Nothing to him," returns Jarvis, jauntily, as if he had dragged the waggonette full himself. (The Horse looks sleepily on, all the time, but, like the prisoner at an English Criminal trial, "his mouth is closed," and I pity him.) "Nothing! He faces his hills from first to last as though they were mole-heaps"——

"P'raps," I interrupt, sharply, with a side-glance at my Aunt and the Ladies, "he'd stumble over mole-heaps."

My Aunt and the Ladies don't enjoy my little fun, just thrown in as it were to lighten the entertainment. They are gradually coming to admire the horse! They began by pitying him, because of his woebegone appearance; then

they pitied him more on hearing the account of the work he had done. The next step was to admire him as a hero, while compassionating him as an uncomplaining martyr, and, finally, they burst into singing his praises.

"He really is a pretty-looking creature," says my Aunt.

"Only wants a little more care and attention than I can afford to give him, Ma'am," says Mr. Jarvis, artfully.

"Yes," says Mrs. Pullinger to her husband, "I think when we bought *Ruby* for the children, he wasn't a bit better-looking than this."

"No dear," replies Pullinger, "and he's as handsome a pony—not quite the size of this—as I've ever seen."

(Ahem! Does Pullinger wish me to buy *Ruby*, I wonder?)

The Lady in the Riding-habit observes, "I think he would turn out very well."

"Of course," observes my Equestrian Visitor, "he'll never be showy. But" (to me) "you don't want a Park hack: you want something useful, for double work, and up to your weight."

Now *he* is at it. I've only known this gentleman half an hour, I've not spoken to him three times, and yet, in a matter of horses, he professes to know exactly what *I* want.

If anything could set me against buying this horse on the spot, it is this remark of the Equestrian's. At the same time, I feel that what he says is true. I do *not* want a Park hack, or rather a Park hack is not a necessity of my existence; that is, I can do without one, though if I could get one for the same price as a donkey, I would buy it; because,

after all, if you are mounted at all, you may as well be mounted in first-rate style. Still I admit, that for the country, I do *not* want a hack intended only for the Park. Again, I *do* want something that I can both ride and drive. Now, evidently, one couldn't appear in the Park one day driving, and next day riding, but always the same horse. Besides, it would necessitate a Park carriage, and a Park groom. Now all these I *would* have (that is, I *do want* them) if I could afford them. But I can't. Therefore, when a stranger, like this Equestrian Visitor, who can only judge of my means by the house, and by my Aunt's appearance and mine, tells me that I don't want a Park hack, but something to do "double work," and a really useful (not in any way ornamental) animal, it is as if he had impertinently said, "You're a poor devil, with only an eighth of my income, and you can't show up in the Park, or go about in the season; so you'd better have an old rattletrap and a strong pony to jog about the country with, and save the expense of flys, and, in a general way, avoid London altogether, which is much too swellish and fashionable for your limited means, my boy." That's how I translate *his* remarks; and I set him down as a Snob. The sooner he gets on his own showy horse, and leaves this, the better I shall be pleased; and, what is more, I never want to see him, nor any of his, again.

Old Doddridge actually comes out, suddenly, as a judge of horseflesh. She sniffs, smiles, fiddles with the corner of her apron, and curtseying to no one in particular (though if to anybody, it must be to the cob, as she is standing at a

respectful distance from his nose in a corner), and is heard to murmur, "Oh, ain't he a pretty creecher!"

The select crowd of loafing villagers, male and female, and ragged children, offer their remarks to one another, and seem to be generally on Jarvis's side of the bargain.

"You'd better have him!" says Jarvis, in an off-hand manner, as though he were advising me clear against his own interest. "You won't get such another chance."

Here an interruption to business arises from the visitors taking their departure. Pullinger and his Ladies in the carriage; and the Equestrians on their horses again.

Happy Thought.—To ask Pullinger, just before he's off, what he really thinks about this cob of Jarvis's.

"Ah!" he says, slily, "I never would advise a friend about a horse unless I knew the animal thoroughly. I bought one the other day for fifty, and sold him a week afterwards for twenty. The best judge may be deceived. Get him on trial. I should be sorry to say 'Buy him,' and then for you to turn round and say, 'It was all through Pullinger that I lost my money.' No: you *must* decide for yourself." And they are away.

Bitter reflection as I watch them vanishing in perspective: Where is the friend who will give you *the* advice you require when you really *do* require it? Where is the friend who—but on second thoughts Pullinger has advised me to take the horse on trial. *Query* on what trial? An hour? Shall I detect his faults in an hour? or in a day? or in three days?

Happy Thought.—Four days. Two in harness, and two in saddle.

I return to Jarvis. My Aunt and Doddridge still at the gate. Crowd, a trifle thinned, still about the lane.

Jarvis opens fire, rather blusteringly.

"Well, Sir, are you going to have him?"

"I don't know."

He continues: "When he's been properly looked after for a week or so, you'll see how he'll come out. Quite a gentleman's cob; look in better form, and be in better fettle, too, than nine out of ten that fetch double his price, and ain't worth half it. You may work him all day and all night, too, and he'll always be the same. Gay and light-hearted, and never sick nor sorry from one year's end to the other."

Happy Thought.—What a cheerful disposition and what a constitution! On the other hand I did not know that horses were ever sick (I've seen 'em on board ship in boxes, and a bad sea on, and they've been quite well—I mean, never once called for the steward) or sorry. What should they be "sorry" for?

Stay, on second thoughts, Jarvis is probably using the old English expression. I recollect it now—"A Sorry Jade."

My Aunt has sent Doddridge in for some bread, and is now feeding the horse, and saying, "Pretty creature!" quite affectionately. Doddridge is watching her in strong admiration of my Aunt's intrepidity in going so near the horse's mouth. What annoys me is, that they are both (mistress and maid, united ages, amounting to—no matter

—but they're old enough to know better) playing into Jarvis's hands.

I come to the point without further delay.

"How much do you want for him?"

Mr. Jarvis eyes me sternly and resolute.

"Sixty guineas," says he; "not a penny less; and he's well worth eighty to *you* any day of the week."

I am staggered. Twenty-five, or thirty, for a mild-looking, shaggy, uncared-for-looking animal, with a dent in his neck, an overgrown head, large feet, and a ragged tail, would have been to my mind enough. I don't see where the Sixty is in him. If he's worth that, it is simply and solely on account of his cheerful temperament and healthy constitution. That is to say, he's worth it *inside*. Judging from the *outside*, I should say twenty pounds.

Happy Thought.—"Outside price," Twenty. "Inside price" (disposition and constitution), Forty. Total, Sixty.

I pause. Now to ask about the trial.

CHAPTER XVI.

FINISHING OFF JARVIS.

" M!" I say, "Sixty's a long price."

Mr. Jarvis doesn't appear to think that it is a long price.

"He'll do *your* work," replies Mr. Jarvis, "for many years to come." He is evidently spreading the price over the time.

My Aunt is still feeding him with bread. She treats him much the same as she would a bird. Doddridge in the background admiringly.

"Pretty creature!" says my Aunt.

"Ain't he, Mum!" sighs Doddridge, "and so tame!"

I smile. The smile is intended for Jarvis, in order to show him that I do not regard the animal from my Aunt's—that is, the pet Lamb point of view. Jarvis sees, however, what makes best for his game, and replies to my Aunt, not to me,

"Yes, Ma'am, he'll come to follow you about just like a dog, he will. He'll do anything a'most for those as he knows is kind to him."

There seems to be an exception, or mental reservation, in Jarvis's mind implied in the qualifying word "a'most."

"Well," I say, coming straight to business, "let me have a week's trial."

Jarvis shakes his head.

"No, Sir," he returns, emphatically, "if he ain't sold by to-morrow,—I've had another offer for him, but I'd rather see him placed where I know he'll be well cared for"—here my Aunt gives the beast an apple, while Doddridge goes for some sugar,—between them they seem bent on turning the cob into a dumpling—or do they imagine that *this* will be his staple food to be included in the weekly groceries?—"if he ain't sold by to-morrow," Jarvis continues, "I shall put him into a sale, and take what he'll fetch. I can't afford to keep him any longer."

Happy Thought.—I might buy him for half the money at the sale.

"I wouldn't mind," I observe, deliberately, "giving thirty"—

"Can't do it, Sir," says Jarvis, taking hold of the bridle with a determined air, and preparing to mount the cob and ride off. "Can't do it. Such a noffer's absurd, ridiklus. No," says he, pausing before putting his foot in the stirrup. "I'd take fifty. Why, he cost *me* forty-five guineas."

Happy Thought.—"Well, and what a lot you've taken out of him!" I say.

"Taken out of him!" exclaims Jarvis. "Not a bit. He's improved twenty pounds worth since I had him. I only part with him because I want a bigger animal, and can't keep two.

No. Fifty. You may either take him or leave him. But you won't get such a chance as this again."

He is on the point of mounting ; but doesn't.

I think over "fifty." Suppose after I've got him I find he has a something in his foot: or a trick of—well, Heaven knows what—but a trick. Or if, in short, generally, if he isn't worth the money?

"I'd better get Trott, the vet, to look at him," I say.

"Trott himself wanted to buy him," returns Jarvis, confidently, "and p'raps he'd ha' come to you with him faked up for sale, and have got seventy for him. No, no," adds Jarvis, winking knowingly at my Aunt, and shaking his head ; "*I know* Trott, and what *he* wants to buy, I know well enough *I* can sell."

I hesitate. There are other horses besides this. Why, won't Jarvis let me have him on trial? And yet, on the other hand, why should I doubt Jarvis?

"I'll tell you what I'll do," says Jarvis, after a silence. "You shall drive him to-morrow where you like, any distance, and ride him too, and I'll just charge you merely for his hire. Why Mister Hoxton, of Springfield, he'd have that cob every day on hire if I'd let him. But I won't 'cos he's not careful enough. Now I know I can trust him with you, Sir."

Very good. I accept. Jarvis has clearly made a concession, and I meet him half-way.

"Your man," says Jarvis, looking at the gardener, "can take him now."

"My man," who, up to this time has merely been a

gardener, and nothing but a gardener, suddenly tries to look as much like a groom as possible. He is an honest, good-tempered, slouchy, clodhopping sort of man, not brilliant, but what my Aunt calls "worthy and honest," and I think old Doddridge has set her cap (such a cap !) at him.

He is as near sixty as it is possible for any one to be without seeing fifty-seven again. And so for the matter of that is Doddridge.

"You can manage him, Murgle ?" I say to him, doubtfully. I fancy that though he puts on a bold front, Murgle is really afraid of the cob.

Murgle smiles more to himself than me, as if it were absurd on my part to ask him such a question as that.

The crowd in the road has now dwindled down to only five or six loafers with pipes. I think I catch them nudging one another and grinning. They've known old Murgle for years. They're either sneering at his pretending to be a groom, or at me for having gone so far towards purchasing the horse.

Jarvis says, carelessly, "I'll call in on you to-morrow evening or the day after," and, Jarvis's hand having touched Jarvis's straw-hat by way of saluting my Aunt, Jarvis's legs take him off, at an easy, sauntering pace, down the lane.

Murgle retires with the cob into the stable, and I hear a great deal of "way," "woa," "stand still then, will yer ?" "Get up !" and so forth, given in a tone sufficiently loud to reach me in the garden. Murgle evidently is implying, "There ! I know how to talk to a horse, you see. (Way ! woa !) What, me not know how to get on with a horse !

(Get up, can't yer ?) I'm something more than a gardener, I am ! (Come over, will yer !) "

We re-enter the house, thoughtfully. The crowd lingers on for a while. Nothing more happens. Crowd disperses. "To morrow," I say to my Aunt, "I'll take you out for a drive, and try the horse."

Happy Thought.—To telegraph for Gloppin who knows all about a horse, and ask him to come with me. Do it.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MEMORABLE TRIAL OF JARVIS'S COB INTERRUPTED BY SOMETHING ABOUT GLOPPIN'S GRANDMOTHER.

LOPPIN, "who knows all about it," ("it" meaning The Horse generally,) can't come when he's wanted, of course.

If you *do* require a friend's advice, depend on it that you *can't* depend on it: or, rather, that you can't calculate upon getting it at the important moment.

Then he, Gloppin, I mean—*I* know him—will come to me weeks afterwards, and say, "My dear fellow, I am so sorry I couldn't come over to you on that day. I'd ha' given something to ha' seen that mare you bought. I could ha' told you at once she wouldn't suit you." And so on.

He will—anyone will—volunteer information as to what I *do* want. But what I *don't* want, and what I oughtn't to buy on any account, not a word about *that.*

When I see Gloppin again, I'll be bitter with him. I'll have something cutting to say to him. The worst of it is that, if I don't come across him for two months, I shall, perhaps, have forgotten all about it—shall embrace him heartily, and say, "Hallo, Gloppin! I am so pleased to see you!"—when I really ought to take his hand quietly, and

say, reservedly and sadly, "Gloppin, you should have come to me in the hour of need. Never more, Gloppin, be officer of mine."

Then Gloppin would explain. He always explains, and invariably makes it appear that, whatever the fault was, it was all on *your* side, never on his. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse* is what he acts upon, and so he never has an excuse, but an explanation. His explanations, too, are overwhelming and unanswerable. He contrives to show himself in such brilliant colours, and his friend (the injured party) he exhibits, by inference, as a mean and sordid character.

Thus, supposing, in consequence of Gloppin's not coming when required, and giving his valuable advice about the horse, I buy the animal, and the animal turns out "nasty"—say that he bites my leg, or hand, or rears, or kicks, or rolls over with me—(this last must be very uncomfortable, though, somehow, it sounds genial and funny)—and I have several ribs broken. Well, I meet Gloppin afterwards, and I say to him, coldly and reproachfully,—

"Ah, Gloppin, if you had come as you offered to do, and had given me your advice, I shouldn't have bought that infernal animal, which rolled over with me, which pitched me over his head, which kicked my teeth out, which bit a piece out of my arm," &c., &c.

Gloppin does not, there and then, express his sorrow, but immediately, in an injured tone, and looking horribly hurt (more than myself, who am hurt all over), replies,—

"My dear fellow, how could I? When your telegram came I had been up from eight in the evening till five the

next morning attending to my poor Grandmother, who, I thought, couldn't have lived out the night."

I am done—at once. I feel I've been brutal. To have asked him to tear himself away from his dying Grandmother's bedside, in order to give his opinion of a friend's horse—yes, it was too much.

"I am sorry," I reply, sinking my subject of grief in his, "to hear such bad news of your Grandmother. Has she—I mean is she———?"

"Yes," says Gloppin, cheerfully, "she's all right now. Out, and about. She's a wonderful woman for her age."

"But," I ask, partially recovering from the first shock, "why didn't you drop me a line of explanation?"

"My dear fellow," he replies, "how could I? I couldn't leave her for a moment. Your telegram arrived all right, but they didn't like to disturb me, and of course they were right; and when I opened it, it was too late to explain. I could only reply, 'Can't come.' You got that, didn't you?"

Yes, I own I got that. And we are both satisfied. That is, I accept his explanation. But, if I were to be asked, what I thought, candidly speaking, on the subject, I should be compelled on oath to reply, "I do *not* believe in Gloppin's Grandmother."

Whenever Gloppin doesn't want to do any thing that *you* want him to do, his excuse is his Grandmother.

Ask him to lend you five pounds: he can't, because his money is somehow tied up in his Grandmother's, and he can't ask his Grandmother, suddenly, to lend five pounds, because she's liable to fits, if startled.

He dines with his friends frequently, and laments he can't invite them in return, as it's his Grandmother's house, and she is unable to receive company. "And," he adds, feelingly, "I couldn't send her to bed while we're having a jollification in the dining-room. Besides," he continues, "the old lady is so fond of society that she wouldn't go to bed if I had friends there; and staying up late kills her. She tried it once, and was so ill I thought she'd have died. So I'm obliged to keep very quiet at home."

This is a divergence; but his not coming has riled me, and I can't help noting down how often Gloppin has failed me, when I have most relied upon him, and how every time his excuse has been his Grandmother. She is always doing something wrong, or getting him, or herself, into some scrape or other. She *will* go to church, and sit in a draught: results, almost serious to her, and much anxiety to Gloppin. She will venture out in slippery weather, and down she comes: very near a fracture, and more anxiety to Gloppin. She will sit up late, and be very unwell next day. She will go to the Bank by herself, and come "a nasty one" into the mud, off the lowest step of an omnibus, the conductor of which has mounted his perch, sung out "All right behind!" and the public conveyance gone on at a trot. Concussion: more anxiety to Gloppin. She visits her Solicitor's, and is summoned by a cabman, and Gloppin has to go with her to a police-court. And, above everything, she has one great dread in life, one horror which she is always anticipating, and Gloppin tells me what it is.

"You'd hardly believe it," says Gloppin, knowing that I

have taken a good deal on trust about his Grandmother, "you'd hardly believe it, but she has never had the measles."

At this phenomenon, I exclaim, "Really?"

"It's a fact," says Gloppin, shaking his head decisively; "my Grandmother has never had the measles, and I'm not sure whether she ever had the whooping-cough. Medical men say that to catch either, at *her* age, is most dangerous."

"But," I suggest, "surely *these* are ills which only extremely youthful flesh is heir to?"

"There's the danger," returns Gloppin. "She's all right now, but, should she get into her second childhood, what, medically, is there against her having her first childhood's illnesses, overdue, as it were, and with accumulated interest, eh?"

I confess his reasoning seems correct, though, *somehow*, not quite right *somewhere*. There's a flaw in the premisses.

Happy Thought (*in Note-Book*).—Several floors on the premises. (Work this out, and make it into some story about Sheridan and his son having an argument in a lodging-house.)

The long and short of all this is, that Gloppin doesn't come.

My Aunt is nervously afraid that Gloppin's Grandmother is ill again, and observes that she (my Aunt) would rather not go out in the trap with the new cob.

Happy Thought.—I'll drive over to Trott, the vet's, and ask him what his opinion is.

My man, Murgle, the Groom-Gardener (which sounds something about as uncertain as a horse-marine), makes a great fuss with preparations. I hear him "way-ing" and "woa-ing" and "come-overing," and pishing and blowing, until, finding he is a long time, I enter the stable, and see him having a fight with the cob, which objects to the collar being put over its head.

Murgle is going at the animal, as if harnessing him were a labour for Hercules.

The horse won't have the collar put on in Murgle's way, and Murgle, perspiring, won't give in.

He has got the collar as far as the cob's eyes, where it sticks, and makes the poor creature wild.

Murgle has got all the rest of the harness on first, and the cob seems to me to show ominous signs of impatience about the tail.

"Can't you manage it?" I ask Murgle. I know *I* can't help him.

"Ar'll do it afore arve done with him," says Murgle, with cheerful determination.

It is now a contest. The Horse won't give in, nor will Murgle. I am on the point of saying, "Well, it's no good keeping a horse that you can't harness under an hour and a half,"—by which I really mean "it's no good keeping a man who knows nothing about horses,"—when the stable-yard gate opens, and a small, thick-set, shambling man, in an ostler's dress, enters. He has come from Jarvis's. He sets matters right in a second. He is only two-thirds of Murgle's height, but he manages the cob's head perfectly. The collar

seems suddenly to have become india-rubber in his hands, and fits the cob's head and neck to a nicety.

Then he looks at the harness. Murgle has buckled up the crupper so tightly that it's a wonder the horse hasn't kicked the stable to pieces. I had noticed something wrong about his tail.

Murgle tries to induce the horse to accept the bit at his hands.

The horse won't; resolutely. In fact, he won't have it; not a bit. The Ostler says simply, "'Ere, give it me!" He has the most evident contempt for Murgle.

Happy Thought.—To get little Ostler to give Murgle lessons in harnessing.

"He knows me," says the Ostler, alluding to the horse.

"O' course he does, Dick," answers Murgle, eyeing me doubtfully, to see if I accept *this* as an excuse for *his* not being able to do anything with the animal. I don't.

The Ostler, having harnessed him and put him in the trap, says as "Mr. Jarvis wished him to come with me."

I feel it is but just, that Jarvis should be represented at the trial. I accept; and we—Myself and the Ostler—are to start.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MY DRIVE COMMENCES—TWO DRIVES AND A RIDE—END OF JARVIS'S COB—TROTT'S QUIET ANIMAL.

HE Shambling Ostler wants to know if *he* is to drive Jarvis's horse. The alternative is *my* driving him.

Happy Thought.—Let him drive. Just because *he* is Jarvis's own man, and, therefore, if anything happens to the horse, the legal maxim, *Qui facit per alium facit per se*, will hold good—*i.e.*, when Jarvis's paid agent, the Ostler, is driving, in effect Jarvis himself is holding the reins.

Jarvis's Ostler is *faciting per se* for Jarvis.

I enter the well of the T-cart behind. Dick the Ostler mounts to the driving-box. I stand up, holding on to the rail in front, after the manner of a Groom in a break when they're trying steppers.

This position, my eye on the horse, has a sporting look as we drive into the lane, and leave Murgle at the gate staring.

My first impression of Jarvis's cob is, that he is curiously clever in the use of his near fore-leg, which he seems to

employ in preference to any of the others. He beats time with it, marking, as it were, the first note of each bar.

Happy Thought (*which I keep to myself because it would be lost on the Ostler*).—If "time flies," and Jarvis's Horse can beat time on the road, at what a tremendous pace Jarvis's Horse must go. Work this out, and put it down to Sydney Smith.

I remark, on this leg, to the Ostler.

"He seems," I say diffidently, not liking to pronounce that he actually *does* what I am going to complain of—and after all I may be deceived, and the Ostler must be considered as an expert—"He seems," I say, "to rather *stump* on his near fore-leg."

The Ostler is a man of very few words. He spares one or two for me. "Lor', no, Sir," he replies, huskily, and without turning.

Now, if ever I saw a stumper with my own very dear eyes, that stumper is before me, and is the near fore-leg of Jarvis's horse. And if ever I heard a stumper, that stumper is the positive negative of my proposition conveyed in the Ostler's reply.

Now, which is right?—he or I? Can I doubt my senses? If so, which sense?—my sight or my hearing? or both? I *see* the horse stump, I *hear* him stump, and I also hear the Ostler deny, *totidem verbis*, that he does stump.

Happy Thought.—New sign for an inn. Instead of the "*Magpie and Stump*," the "*Horse and Stump.*" Will

send this to the person who invents signs for Inns. By the way, who is he? Is it a regular profession,—the Sign-Inventor?

The Ostler makes a mysterious noise. When the horse hears this, he stumps less, and goes quicker.

"It's only his way at starting sometimes," the Ostler explains.

So far I see the Ostler is right. The horse has dropped his stump, and is going well—with an exception. He doesn't seem quite to know what to do with his head. He jerks it up loosely, about every two minutes, towards the left, as though he were saying, "Look here! Come this way, down to the left: that's where I want to go." I remark this to the Ostler.

"That ain't nothing," replies the Ostler. "It's only his way. He's as sound a little 'oss as can be. If you was to drive him all day he'd be no different."

To the horse's credit-side I must note that he doesn't shy, doesn't rear, or attempt to run away. That, in fact, he *is* quiet in harness.

I observe that I should like to take the reins.

The Ostler makes no objection. We change places. I drive, and the Ostler looks over my shoulder. I wish the Ostler had brought out a pocket-handkerchief. Sniffing may be, and probably is, economical, but it is unpleasant. Now I think of it, I never remember having heard of, or seen an Ostler with a pocket-handkerchief.

We turn to the right on a new road.

The horse seems to hang on my hand heavily.

This the sniffing Ostler attributes to the bit, "which," he says, "don't give no freedom to the mouth."

I can't help remarking that this stumping with his near fore-leg suggests lameness.

"Lame! not him, Sir; it's only at startin' agen as he does it," replies the Ostler; and then makes a new noise, something between a sniff and a chirrup, which is evidently recognised by the horse as a sound of encouragement, as he, in sporting phrase, "pulls himself together,"—he is rather in pieces with detached legs acting on their own account, like those of his owner, Jarvis,—and goes along as though he had never known what stumping meant.

Happy Thought.—"Stumping the country,"—another idea for a sign-board,—"*The Horse and Speaker*," or "*'Orse and Orator.*"

I don't think he'll do. On returning I find Trott the vet, who has come over with a horse. Gloppin himself looks in.

Trott's Horse.—"Gay, light-hearted, carries his head well," and his tail, too, for the matter of that; in fact, his tail is more effective than his head, as he has a way of flourishing the former round and round triumphantly, with a kind of Catherine-wheel effect.

Disadvantages of Trott's *horse.*—He (the horse) is nearly sixteen hands, which I find an obstacle in mounting. I don't get on very easily, and it occurs to me that it is a nasty height to fall.

Advantages.—He is "showy," and, what Trott calls, a

"Gentleman's horse every inch of him." He's well worth his money (says Trott), if I take him at seventy; and every week will increase his value. Some people would be glad of him at a hundred; *only* that having promised to get something good for me, Trott has brought him here directly he (the horse) came out of the country.

Happy Thought.—Kind of Trott, and thoughtful.

This puts Jarvis's Cob out of the question. Let Jarvis have his Cob back.

"I think you're right, Sir," says Trott, confidentially speaking about Jarvis's Cob. "It's not the sort of thing for you. It 'ud do very well for a butcher, or Mister Jarvis himself to knock about on; but you want something that'll not only do your country work, but if you *do* feel inclined to ride up to town, something that you can show on, and won't be ashamed of in a gentleman's stable."

Quite my view. So there's an end of Jarvis's Cob. After all he *did* stump. "I know him," says Trott, summarily, "tender-toed."

This sounds as if Jarvis's Cob was always having his feet in hot water, or was a trifle gouty.

Happy Thought.—To ask Trott (as a vet) whether a horse *can* have gout? Trott smiles enigmatically. Clearly he is unwilling to impart professional knowledge for nothing. He has had to pay for his education, why should he give bits of it to me gratis? I do not, as counsel say, press the question.

Will Trott's horse go in harness? Yes. I can try him. In Trott's trap. Luckily Gloppin *is* able to accompany me on the occasion. Trott doesn't come, no Ostler or *employé* of Trott's comes. My Aunt so admires the horse that she proposes joining us, and does so.

I drive. Aunt by my side. Gloppin behind. The horse starts easily. Almost too easily, as he goes with a high step suddenly out of the yard, and we nearly graze the gate-post and take the paint off Trott's wheels. It makes me gasp. Though I'm quite accustomed to the reins, yet I feel as though I were driving now for the first time. I turn him to the left with no decided object in view of going anywhere in particular, and he steps out freely.

But—there's a something—a sort of upheaving of his back and hind-quarters—which suggests an inclination on his part to get out of his harness. To my mind his very pace, his arched neck, and his eagerness to bulge out his chest and throw himself forward, suggest the idea of his feeling fettered, and wanting to chuck it all off and become the wild horse of the prairie, or, at all events, the browser on the common. As I *may* be wrong, I keep these reflections to myself, not wishing to make my Aunt nervous.

I feel, though, that she'll make *me* nervous very soon. She is perpetually clutching at the side-rail, and throwing herself back whenever the horse makes a start forward; of which movement (perfectly in keeping with my theory about his wishing to get out of it altogether) he seems to be remarkably fond.

"He doesn't want the whip," Gloppin remarks.

He does *not;* and, if he did, I should not like to try its effect on him.

"I like a horse that goes without a whip," says Gloppin again. Then, to my Aunt, "Don't you, Ma'am?"

My Aunt replies, smiling convulsively, "Yes, it's a—pretty —ah!"—(the horse has darted on, and she has been jerked back)—"but"—(to me)—"Do you think he's quite quiet?"

"O," I answer jauntily, but with secret misgivings as to what he'll do when I want to turn him and drive him back to Trott's. "Oh, he's as quiet as a lamb."

Happy Thought.—I'd rather drive a lamb.

CHAPTER XIX.

I PURCHASE A HORSE.

IRST Happy Thought.—Winter and hunting. Or, at all events, if uncertain about hunting, driving and riding. Trott, the vet, has a horse to suit me. And Trott has put the horse into harness for trial. My Aunt, pale and nervous, but silent and courageous, is by my side (I am driving) and Gloppin, my horsey friend, is behind. I've asked Gloppin down here on purpose to obtain his candid opinion. My candid opinion (which is that I don't seem to get on very comfortably with the horse)—I keep to myself; but Gloppin has been, so to speak, specially retained.

Now, what does Gloppin think? At this moment I *really do* want his advice. And he fails me.

I can't tell what Gloppin *thinks*. He says, as if he didn't want to commit himself, "Well, you see, he's young, and you're not used to handling him."

"We'd better turn back," suggests my Aunt.

"But he's quiet," I say, hoping I shan't have to alter my opinion when the turning-point arrives.

"O, he's quiet enough," returns Gloppin, "and he's showy."

"He moves so oddly," my Aunt ventures to observe, nervously.

The horse, still trotting, executes a figure like a segment of a circle.

"Shies, I think," I say to Gloppin.

Gloppin replies, "O, any horse will do *that*. There's nothing in that. As I say, he's young."

Happy Thought.—And Youth will have its fling. Uncomfortable idea at this moment. The horse shies at straws. He doesn't appear to object to anything but straws. And he must have seen straw before. This suggests a proverb—"straws show which way the horse shies"—work this up.

As I don't want to appear nervous (though I believe my Aunt's feelings at this moment are nothing to mine), I agree with him that this action of his (uncommonly like shying) is nothing.

We commence turning. Very steadily in a wide part of the road. The horse's idea is to begin by backing, gradually getting the right hand shaft at right angles to the trap. At last, desperation and the certainty of the ditch behind us, nerve me to use the whip, diffidently.

Happy Thought.—Quotation adapted, "Touch him up tenderly." The horse seems to execute this movement uneasily, or awkwardly, as if he had been always accustomed to go straightforward, and turning wasn't in the contract.

I feel that I've got him well in hand, with my lips pressed

together, and a grasp of iron. He comes round much quieter than I had expected, and commences going away with a will. We all feel (though we don't say so) that we've had a narrow escape. I begin to mistrust my own driving, and I'm sure that both Gloppin and my Aunt have lost all confidence in me. I also feel that a few hours of this excitement would turn my hair grey.

My Aunt, who has held her breathing in suspense for a few seconds, now respires profoundly. Gloppin, too, has been silent. As to Gloppin, if anything happens, *he* can step out behind easily enough: *we* can't.

"He knows his way back," observes Gloppin, pleasantly. "He *can* go."

He *can*. With his head down, and his body heaving under the kicking-strap like a surging sea.

The horrid thought occurs to me that my grasp of iron won't last out.

"Give him his head a little more," says Gloppin.

I doubt the policy. But to show my Aunt that I know what I'm about, and am not in the least afraid, I relax my grip, gradually. I address him in a conciliatory tone, "Gently, old man—gently, gent—ly!"

But, with his head down, and stepping out faster and faster, the "old man" only seems to be saying, "Come along! back to Trott's! Back to Trott's!! Let me get rid of this confounded harness, and away from the sound of those horrid wheels, that follow me about everywhere. Come on! back to Trott's! in less than no time! Hooray!!"

He seems to be flying from the wheels, as from the re-

minders of guilty conscience. He is a sort of Irving, in *The Bells*. His pace is increasing. Gloppin says nothing.

My Aunt is pale.

"I think," she says, with a spasmodic effort at self-control, "if you'll stop—I'll—get out—and walk home—I'd rather."

"It's all right," I say, abruptly. But I return to the grasp of iron, check him in his stride, and feel that this sort of thing can't go on long.

Gloppin is silent.

Trott's is in view. I see it. So does the horse. "Now then," he seems to say, "let's see who'll get there first. Yoicks for Trott's! Full inside! All right! Off!!"

For a moment we seem to be nothing behind him; the air has blown my Aunt's bonnet back; even Gloppin, taken by surprise by the suddenness of the start, has just prevented himself from tumbling backwards into the well, by holding on to the seat in front, and I summon all my forces to get the jubilant animal to finish steadily.

Happy Thought.—Just shaved the gate-post by an inch. Try to look as if this were first-rate driving on my part.

I pull him up at Trott's stable yard. It has been warm work, but we enter quietly. If ever anybody was glad to descend from the seat of a box-passenger, that person is my Aunt.

Strangely enough, she now praises the horse. So does Gloppin.

I remark (to Trott) that the horse shies, that he seems

unaccustomed to harness. Trott, with whom Gloppin agrees on every point, as if he were *his* (Trott's) partner, not my friend come to advise *me*, and pick out the horse's defects—Trott answers, that he doesn't shy—he's only fresh; that he's not been in harness for some time, and as an answer to my objection that he's young, "If he were only two years older," he adds emphatically, "he'd be worth a hundred and fifty guineas to anyone."

"He's a cheap horse," says Gloppin. But then Gloppin isn't going to buy him.

I have another trial of him without Gloppin and my Aunt. I ride him. Very carefully. He seems to be light and airy, with an inclination to bound up suddenly.

This is, I find subsequently, what Trott calls "springy."

He is springy. Like an animated mattress, only harder.

He is especially springy when he sees a donkey. He is springy again when he has to pass a brewer's cart. He is most remarkably springy when a barrel suddenly tumbles off the cart as I am passing and rolls away down the hill with a noise like thunder. I don't believe, had anybody else been on the horse, that that barrel would have tumbled off. Why is it these things always happen to *me?* (*Note* on *F. Fate. Typical Developments*, Vol. XXV., ch. 2.)

At this his springiness shows itself in bounds, hops, starts, and I think—I only think, for I am not certain as to knowing exactly when I am on his back—a kick. If a kick, it was not much of a kick, but enough.

Happy Thought.—Walk him gently. It's a great thing

for a horse to be a good walker. When I get accustomed to him I can trot, or canter.

We descend the hill. His springiness is very objectionable in descending a hill. His hind quarters always seem to be about to double themselves up underneath me. After a time, as nothing of this sort happens, I find that he really is walking down the hill beautifully. It is a long hill, and we have done half of it. I begin to like him. He hasn't shied again. I can sit loungingly, and admire the view.

* * * * * * *

He *has* shied again.

I don't know what at. Nothing that I could see. Being unprepared I checked him suddenly, and this had the effect of making his hind legs slide underneath him, as if he were going to fold them up. Being further unprepared for this double effect, my left leg suddenly shoots up in the air, in the direction of the horse's left ear, and the horse, taking this perhaps as some hint from me to get on faster, begins to trot. In a second I am nowhere, I am anywhere; I see a leg up in the air (which I recognise as belonging to me, though not as being under my control); I am conscious of another in the stirrup on the right side, and, as there ought to be another on the left, I feel as though I were, for the moment, constructed so as to exemplify, practically, the Manx coat-of-arms, with three legs all going round at once. I am doing "three wheels a' a'p'ny" on horseback. I think I am on my head—no—my left foot is laying hold of my arm, or my arm of my left foot—both together have grappled

the mane—and by a gigantic, muscular, and athletic effort, I am once more upright, and in the saddle again.

Happy Thought.—Yes. I can answer for it: *the horse is quiet: very quiet.* While I was executing all these gymnastics round his head and over and about his back, he never stirred out of a walk. Perhaps he was too bewildered.

But I'm sure he shies.

Yet—he doesn't shy again.

We trot suspiciously. He is suspicious (evidently, by his ears,) of something jumping out of the hedges at him, and I am suspicious of his jumping at nothing.

We canter. All's well that ends well. I am at my ease; but still wary.

Finally, thinking that his faults are those of youth, and will soon disappear, I buy him.

CHAPTER XX.

ALL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BUYING AND SELLING.

AVING bought Trott's horse, I find that he won't cross a bridge; that he won't pass a cart; that he has a predilection for turning down any opening on the left, and starting off on his own account; that, (though quiet), he is dreadfully nervous, which makes *me* nervous; that he is frightened to death of a train, of cows, of a baker, of a perambulator; that he has (though perfectly quiet) a playful way of running Murgle, my man, into a corner, and butting at him; that (though docile as a lamb) he doesn't like being saddled, hates being bridled, and there's a difficulty about getting him out of the stable and the stable-yard. Twice, with Murgle on his back, who has started to exercise him, does he return on his own responsibility, refusing, (always quietly and steadily,—being quite "the gentleman's horse")—to go any further than he thought fit. Whip, spur, kindness—nothing affects him. He is invariably polite, so to speak, shaking his head at the corner of a road, and negativing any idea of progression.

After a week, he firmly, but always courteously, refuses to go more than a hundred yards from the stable-gate. At a

certain point he turns round, and comes back. Sometimes with some one on him, and sometimes without. Sometimes it is Murgle, sometimes it isn't. If it isn't, Murgle is following. Whether with or without a rider, the horse is quite amiable, quiet, cheerful, and, so to speak, polite.

I can't complain of his "manners," they're good enough, but his evident good breeding only makes his obstinacy more irritating.

The Railway Station is a mile from my house, and he won't take me more than a hundred yards of the way. At a hillock he stops and returns. Quite quietly and pleasantly, I admit, but even this is not comforting when I see the train arriving and leaving without me, and I have got some important business in town.

At the end of a fortnight, being put into harness, he simply stands still, and won't stir one step out of the yard.

He gains the day, and is taken out of harness. He goes back to his stable quite quietly, and is so gentle as to eat an apple out of my Aunt's hand.

But I didn't buy a horse merely to eat apples out of my Aunt's hand.

Happy Thought.—Send for Trott.

Trott is sent for. He can't make it out. Trott says, "he wasn't like that when he was with *him*," and proceeds to give him the highest character. This implies that he has learnt his obstinacy here: from *me*. I let Trott try him. Trott is convinced, and re-buys him.

I sell him back at a loss, and buy another—a clever hack.

He is warranted to go in harness. The warranty didn't say which way he *would* go. I put him into harness, and *he goes backwards.*

He is otherwise clever, and I do not think *this* was stupidity.

Sold *him* at a loss. Employing Trott as my selling agent.

Suited at last. Cheap and nice. A cob, fourteen two. Carries me (only I shan't ride him again, as I fancy he stumbles when out of harness), and goes quietly in trap. Strong: rather too like a deer about the legs, but my Aunt thinks it perfection, and on the spot names the animal "*Gazelle.*"

After three weeks I come to the conclusion that *Gazelle* is not strong enough for my work. *Gazelle* stumbles *in* harness, and comes down on one knee. It might have been a bad cut, but he only "took a little hair off."

I have determined to sell him. But this time I shall do it myself, not through Trott.

Happy Thought.—Selling and buying are two very different things. Hitherto, personally, I've been the buyer, now, personally, I am the seller. A proud position.

Happy Thought.—Of course I don't part with him because he stumbles. O dear no! because really and truly the stumbling was nothing. Any horse—(this is my reasoning when debating whether I ought to mention the stumbling to a purchaser)—may stumble under similiar circumstances. It was a stony road: it was dark: I was driving carelessly,

&c., &c. And then see *how cleverly he picked himself up!* Why that's worth all the money alone!

Then as to stumbling and coming on his nose over some turf (when I was nearly spilt)—well, he's not up to my weight, and I had let the reins lie on his neck; and, after all, it was not a "stumble"—it was merely knocking his foot against some little mound or stone—nothing more. O no, he's all right.

Therefore I advertise as for sale:—

"'*Gazelle.*' *A bright Chestnut Cob, silver-tipped Mane and Tail, fourteen two, quiet to ride and drive. Not up to too much weight. Suitable for all sorts of light work. Fast trotter. Only parted with on account of the owner making alterations in his stables.*"

"That's fair," I say to Murgle, after reading it out to him.

"Yes, Sir, that's fair," returns honest Murgle. "He's a nice little 'oss as ever I see, he is."

"And," I add, alluding again to the advertisement, feeling a qualm or two of conscience about it, "it's true."

Murgle replies—but I fancy a little uneasily, as he shifts his legs, coughs, puts his hand before his mouth (Murgle's company manners), and twiddles his old wideawake—"Yes, Sir. O, that's true enough, that is."

I shall not ask this witness any more questions—except one. It is this:—

"Do you think, Murgle, that the Chestnut had ever been down before I had him?"

He is quite ready:—

"O yes, Sir" (in a tone of surprise, as though there could

have ever been any doubt about it whatever), "he'd ha' been down sure enough. Cut-a-both knees you see, Sir."

"O—ahem—I never saw that when I bought him. And they never said anything about it."

Murgle smiles. So do I. He takes the advertisement to the post.

Somehow I feel that Murgle and myself are conspiring.

My friend Jelfer calls.

"I hear you've got a cob you want to sell. What's the figure?"

I name more than I had intended to ask, out of pity for my friend, and rather hoping to stop Jelfer at the outset.

Although I have taken to horse-dealing, and my whole moral nature has been changed in an hour or so, yet I am still tender-hearted. I *know*, from the nature of my business, that I am going to take in somebody, but I do not want to deceive Jelfer.

Happy Thought.—I will tell him everything; and *then* if he chooses to buy, let him. But I *will* be open and candid.

"The price is all right," replies Jelfer, "if he's what I want."

Jelfer sees, and likes him.

"He's good enough for me," he says.

Then comes the question—*the* question which I never asked the man of whom *I* bought him. I didn't distrust a stranger, why should a friend mistrust *me?*

Jelfer feels the knees critically. I and Murgle look on. Murgle nervous, but prepared, I fancy, like *Moses* in the

School for Scandal, to "take his oath of that," whatever it is. I notice that our eyes do *not* meet. I am sure that I should make a very bad swindler; and as to Murgle, he'd be taken up and sent into penal servitude before he had barely commenced his nefarious career.

Jelfer, feeling the knees, asks, "Ever been down?"

Now then. My Good Angel and my Evil Angel are in the stable-yard. "Do as you'd be done by," says one. "Do as you were done," says t'other.

Happy Thought.—Split the difference.

I say, carelessly, and with much candour (despising myself all the time as a humbug), "Well, you see for yourself the Chestnut's knocked a little hair off, but that's nothing; that'll come all right again. He's not up to my weight, and there was a grip, or something, but he didn't come down."

"Ah!" says Jelfer. "I suppose he's all right in harness?"

Good Angel nowhere now. Gone out of the stable-yard, and weeping at the gate.

"First-rate in harness. I suppose you only want to drive him in a pony-trap?"

"That's all."

"Ah, he'll do that well enough."

The Good Angel looks in just for a second, with a tear in his eye. I relent a bit, because I picture to myself poor Jelfer coming a cropper while going down-hill. I say to him, "I should always keep the bearing-rein on, because he's been accustomed to that, and you must keep him well in hand down-hill."

Now if anything, short of going on my knees, and admitting to Jelfer that the Chestnut is a regular tumble-down-groggy affair, could tell Jelfer the true state of the case, the above broad hint would be sufficient.

But Jelfer goes blindly on.

"He'll do. I've got my cheque-book here. And if you'll lend a saddle, I'll buy him, and ride home."

I hesitate. It's my first effort at horsedealing, and I did not expect this enormous success. Oughtn't I to offer him on trial? Oughtn't I to say, "My dear fellow, you'd better ride him to-day, and if he suits, send me the money to-morrow"?

No; why should I?

Happy Thought.—Jelfer's old enough to take care of himself.

"Or, I'll tell you what I'll do," says Jelfer. "I'll give you half the money, and swop my Grey with you—the one you saw me on the other day. I don't wan't to keep two, and I haven't got work enough for the old Grey. You *must* have a horse, and it would be a bargain for you."

Now what does *this* mean? I know Jelfer's horse, and admire it. I have often thought that Jelfer's Grey *would* suit me. I shouldn't mind the exchange with the money, only it is but fair that *I* should ask *the* question:

"The Grey's not been down, has he?"

"Been down!" he exclaims. "You couldn't throw him down if you tried."

He is so hearty, that I am satisfied.

"You know him," he adds, carelessly, "and there he is."

As Jelfer doesn't ask any further questions about *mine*, I won't ask any more about *his*. I confess that I would rather he did not make any more inquiries.

"Splendid goer, my old Grey," he says, as he writes out the cheque. "He only wants work, and *you* can give him that. There!"

The money has passed. *Gazelle* is no longer my property. Jelfer mounts him, and promises to send his Grey this evening.

I have my misgivings. All that puzzles me now, is, which has got the worst of it—Jelfer or myself?

Jelfer, I *think*, because I've got Jelfer's cheque. Certainly it's only half the money I asked, but the Grey is coming to-night.

When the Grey comes, I shall know.

At present all I hope is that Jelfer will get home safely. For my part, I wouldn't ride that Chestnut of mine for ten miles on a hard road, with up and down-hill, and occasional stones, not for two hundred pounds down.

That's my private opinion about the Chestnut I've just sold to Jelfer.

CHAPTER XXI.

ALL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BUYING AND SELLING—JELFER'S EXCHANGE NO ROBBERY—A FRESH TRIAL OF A NEW HORSE—THE GALLANT GREY—RESULT.

WEEK after the Sale of the Chestnut "Gazelle."—I have been waiting with some anxiety to hear how Jelfer likes his new purchase. Honestly speaking, I have been waiting to hear if he arrived home safely on the day he bought him. The doubt on my mind just now is *has* Jelfer *got home at all?* Sometimes I picture to myself poor Jelfer on the green-sward by the roadside, gasping, and the Chestnut in a ditch, with both his knees damaged, supporting himself in a staggery manner against the bank.

I can imagine Jelfer returning on foot to my house, with his head bound up, and saying, "Look here! You said he was sound! Why, he was as groggy as possible at the knees, and, after a few miles, down he came."

I can imagine (have once begun imagining) how I should plunge further into the mire of horse-dealing, and reply, "My dear Jelfer, I never knew the horse stumble in my life; you must have been riding carelessly, with a loose rein, and thrown him down."

Murgle would swear that the knees were all right (or, at all events, not like they are now), when Jelfer took the Chestnut away.

However, these are only the magic-lantern slides presented by a conscience, which has not yet got acclimatised to the atmosphere of horse-dealing.

The Postman comes with a letter.

Jelfer's handwriting.

I tremble! I open it! It does *not* begin. "Confound you, you swindling rascal!" but, in his old style, "Dear old boy!"—Good fellow, Jelfer!

Happy Thought.—I begin to think the Chestnut must have been all right. Hope so sincerely. Only ought'nt I to have got more for her—I mean him?

Note.—Sometimes "*Gazelle*" is called "she;" sometimes "he." This is my Aunt's fault. Directly my Aunt saw the animal, she christened it "*Gazelle*" on the spot, and settled its sex as feminine. I had no objections to make. All cats are called "she;" and all pretty-looking horses, in my Aunt's opinion, are feminine nominally.

Thus it happens that *Gazelle* has been sometimes "she," sometimes "he." To avoid controversy, and not to have any subsequent dispute with Jelfer as to my having sold it under false pretences, I always spoke to him (or tried to) of the horse as "it," or as "*Gazelle*."

Jelfer's letter informs me that he is perfectly satisfied with "*Gazelle*," which is already quite a favourite with his family —(never knew Jelfer had a family—hope he won't be such

an idiot as to trust one of his children on *Gazelle's* back)—"and," he adds, "I have driven and ridden her, and she suits me down to the ground."

"Down to the ground" is an unfortunate phrase. O Jelfer, if you only knew how nearly I had been shot over that Chestnut's head, right between his ears, with only the crown of my hat between me and the hard road! But no matter—

Happy Thought.—After this note of praise, Jelfer *can't* bring an action against me. If he did, I remember having heard a Barrister say that there's nothing in law so difficult to prove as *mala fides* in horse-dealing; only I'm sure I should *look* so guilty, that the Judge would give it against me out of hand. However, that danger is past. Jelfer's letter continues—"It'll just do for my wife to drive about Tunbridge Wells in a low basket-chaise."

Heavens! If there is one sort of vehicle more certain to bring out *Gazelle's* failings it is a low basket-chaise. In such a trap you have no purchase over the animal, and *Gazelle* wants as much holding up as a fantoccini doll. In fact, if I dared say so, she is not unlike the "magic donkey" which we used to see in toy-shops at Christmas-time. I think I shall take in the Tunbridge Wells local paper, to see if anything happens to Mrs. Jelfer.

Jelfer's Letter.—"You will have the Grey in the course of this afternoon. He's been doing nothing for some time, and he's a bit too fat and wheezy; but your work'll soon get him into condition again."

There is something in this I don't like. What does "fat and wheezy" mean? It's artfully thrown in.

Jelfer's Letter.—"He's not fast, but you don't want to ride trotting matches or drive sixteen miles an hour."

No, I don't absolutely *want* to. *But* if I had a horse which could *certainly* beat every other horse trotting, and could easily go sixteen miles an hour, why I should do it, even if I had to wear a white hat with a black band, tight trousers, and be compelled to attend suburban race-meetings.

Jelfer's Grey arrives.

It's a heavy-looking, sleepy-eyed animal, with white eye-lashes. No doubt about its being a Grey. I should describe it as a moulting Grey. I have seen something like him in Flemish pictures.

I at once inspect his knees. No—there is no sign of his having been down. So far, Jelfer is honest.

Murgle, behind his hand, gives it as his opinion, "As he's a niceish sort of 'orse."

"Strong?" I observe.

"Yes, Sir," returns Murgle, as if he was keeping his real opinion to himself, and was putting his hand to his mouth either to prevent its coming out, or to hide a smile—"Yes, Sir, he *is* strong."

The man who has brought him says nothing. But I notice that his eyes and Murgle's meet occasionally, and that they both seem troubled with a short cough.

The man (after a glass of beer and a shilling for himself) says, as he "don't know nothink about the 'oss—honly

brought 'im hover. Walked 'im a'most hall the way. Quite quiet; no wice: no tricks o' no sort.

All this sounds well. After all, I think Jelfer, having given me a cheque *and* a horse, *must* have got the worst of the bargain.

Happy Thought.—Try him in the trap.

He allows himself to be harnessed. He *is* quiet. I mount the box—Murgle behind. I don't ask my Aunt to accompany me this time, because she made me so nervous before.

I square my elbows, take up the reins, and say "Tchk!" encouragingly.

The horse pays no sort of attention.

I pull the reins a trifle tighter, and repeat "Tchk!" less encouragingly, and in a tone of command.

The horse stands quite still, with rather a hang-dog expression about the head.

With some diffidence, I use the whip. Just once tickle, with one "Tchk!"

Happy Thought.—Always use whip with diffidence on a new horse, because, however quiet he may have been up to that moment, you don't know what he might suddenly do on feeling the whip. He might send up his heels through the splash-board, kick at me, dash off into the road, overturn the trap, leave me senseless—and perhaps never sensible again—in the ditch. In this case Jelfer would decidedly have had the best of it.

The Grey does nothing of the sort. He takes less notice

of the whip than I should do of a fly on somebody else's nose.

Double the dose. Two flicks of the whip and two imperious "tchks." No effect.

Treble it. Three flicks, sharp 'uns, and one aimed at his ear. He rouses himself, shakes his head,—is he going to be vicious—if so, I am prepared. No—he shakes himself again with such a shiver as makes his harness rattle, and then stands "as he was."

This is puzzling.

Happy Thought.—Murgle shall lead him out. Murgle does so. We are in the lane. The horse is walking. Murgle mounts behind. We have gained one point. We are in motion. The horse walks along lazily, very much as if he was looking out for some convenient place by the roadside where to lie down and doze.

Tchk! flick!—Flick, tchk.—Get up! *Get* along then—Get on then!—Come up!! Tchk, flick, flick, flick—Swish, swish, Schwack!

Schwack is meant to convey the temper I put into the last lash.

The Grey awakes with a "hallo-anybody-speaking-to-me" sort of manner, and goes into a trot. Such a trot. A jog. Exactly what has been named a "jog-trot." He is the very picture of conventionality and Conservatism. *Jog-trot—jog-trot—jog-trot*—as if there was no such thing as a train to catch—as if there were no telegraphs, and that *he*, the Grey, had the monopoly of taking messages at his own pace·

Schwack !—Schwack ! !—Schwack ! ! !

"He don't seem to mind the whip much, do 'ee, sir?" observes Murgle.

No: he *do* not. Jelfer *has* the best of it. At this moment I should hardly be sorry to hear of the Chestnut having come madly down hill with Jelfer anywhere.

Schwack ! !—Schwack ! ! !—Schwack ! ! !—and CRACK. The whip breaks.

We have managed to get one mile from home. Without a whip it is no use trying to go any farther. My patience is exhausted. My arm aches. I pull his left rein, and he comes round in a lurching way—just as a heavy old tub answers its rudder.

Happy Thought.—He will know he is going back home, and will trot fast.

Not a bit. There being no longer any whip he takes his own time and pace.

Happy Thought.—Adaptation of a line in Mazeppa.

"Again he urges on his *mild* career."

By Murgle's advice, I prod the Grey with the stump of the whip. No use; he only shrugs his shoulders, and walks on quietly. Murgle proposes to get out and hit him, in, what Murgle considers, "tender points," such as the ribs. Murgle (being *au fond* of a savage nature—*Happy Thought —proverb*—Scratch off his livery and you'll find the brute) wants to kick him. No. I won't hear of it.

Happy Thought.—"If I had an animal what wouldn't go, wouldn't I wallop him," if I hadn't broken my whip. But we are at his mercy. I can only guide him. His drowsiness becomes almost infectious. If there were before us six miles of it instead of barely one, I feel sure we should all three be fast asleep; I mean the horse, Murgle, and myself. He doesn't attempt to lie down. He walks on—and on—and on—like a ghost. Or—he is fast asleep.

Happy Thought.—The Somnambulist horse.

Murgle's Happy Thought.—"He's a slug, that's what he is."

Murgle is right. The Grey *is* a slug. I want a horse, not a slug. Got lots of slugs in the garden. They go if you give them salt. No amount of salt on his tail would make this Grey go. Home once more. The man who brought the horse has not yet left, so I tell him that I want him to ride the Grey back to Mr. Jelfer, and give him this note:—

"DEAR JELFER,—I do *not* want to go sixteen miles an hour, or win a trotting match, but I do wish to go *out of a walk sometimes*—and I don't want to have to break *four or five whips* over a *slug's* back in the course of half a mile. I want something that can *go*—something that can *catch a train*. If you can't supply me with *that*, send me the difference in a cheque, Yours, &c."

The Grey leaves. I am horseless. Jelfer will have two

horses. I don't propose to Jelfer to give me back my Arab steed (the Chestuut) because I should have to return his cheque. Perhaps Jelfer will send me another horse. I don't think he'll send me another cheque. We shall see.

CHAPTER XXII.

NO NEWS FROM JELFER—FREEMASONRY IN RELATION TO HORSE-DEALING—CASUISTRY AND MASONRY—NOTE FOR A POEM—AN ARRIVAL.

HILE I am waiting to hear some news of another horse, Cazell calls on me.

I tell him of how Jelfer took me in with the "slug," and how really I should never be surprised to hear of "*Gazelle*" coming down, if Mrs. Jelfer will drive him in a basket chaise.

"O," says Cazell regretfully, "if you and Jelfer were Freemasons you wouldn't try to do one another."

I am indignant. I have *not* tried to "do" Jelfer; and I do not suppose, I say, that Jelfer really intended to take me in about the slug.

Again if I can't trust a man as a man, why should I, as a Freemason?

"Ah," returns Cazell mysteriously, "you don't understand. A brother is bound by a solemn oath not to deceive a brother of the craft, under certain serious pains and penalties."

"But," I say sceptically, "that sort of thing is not enforced now-a-days."

"O," exclaims Cazell, nodding his head significantly, "isn't it!"

I think it over to myself. If there really are advantages, specially in horse-dealing, in being a Freemason, the sooner I'm a Freemason the better.

Cazell puts cases, supposed to be historic. "Facts," *he* says. For instance (Cazell's first case for the advantage of being a Freemason). You meet a robber, he is just going to knock you down and take your money, or you *are* knocked down and he's just going to take your money, when suddenly it occurs to you to make the sign. The robber makes another; you reply, he returns: he grasps your hand. You his! You are brothers! and he doesn't rob you. Nay, more, perhaps, he gives you a free pass through his district.

I admit (to Cazell) that he has shown a case when being a Mason would be decidedly an advantage.

"Of course," continues Cazell, easily, "if that robber is taken up, and your evidence is wanted to convict him, you, as a Mason and a brother, cannot give it. Not even if that robber has committed the most outrageous crimes."

This seems to me to raise a difficulty. We argue the question as between the duty (under oath) of a Freemason to Masons, and of a man to his fellow-men The result of the conversation is to make me feel more assured that Freemasonry would be *decidedly* of use in horse-dealing, if the horse-dealer and myself were both Masons.

Happy Thought.—In fact if the Horse-dealer were a cheat and a Mason, I as a Mason would certainly get the better of

him. I can imagine the interview. Practically it would be the same as the supposed case between myself and the robber, suggested just now by Cazell. The horse-dealer is just, as it were, going to put his hand in my pocket, to rob me of seventy pounds for a horse which is not worth thirty, when I grasp it, squeeze it, give him the sign, whatever it is, he starts back, and exclaims, "What! my Brother!" We embrace, and I say, "*Now*, how much for the horse?" "O," says he, making an extra sign perhaps, "Do not give me more than twenty-five, for I can't take thirty from *you*."

"Then," argues Cazell, "Freemasonry's of use in battle; German Freemason meets a French Mason, they're just going to kill one another; one makes the sign, t'other replies; they shake hands and pass on."

This sounds pleasant. But isn't it disloyal on both sides? Aren't they there to fight and kill one another? Because, argue this out, and suppose the Generals Freemasons, the Commanders-in-Chief on both sides Freemasons,—why, they'd so lay out their plan of campaign as to avoid clashing with each other at all?

Cazell says, warmly, "" Nonsense! argue it right up to the top. If all Crowned Heads were Freemasons there'd be no fighting at all." I reply that if all men were spotless Christians the result would be the same, and that all Crowned Heads can be Christians, but all can *not* be Freemasons, as for instance Queens.

Cazell here tells me a story how Countess Somebody hid herself behind a picture in a wall, overheard the Masonic

secrets, and was forcibly taken out, and made a Mason on the spot.

The further advantages (beyond those in horse-dealing) of Masonry Cazell continues to set forth ;—That a Mason *must* help a Mason in distress ; that a Mason must not reveal any secret told to him by a brother Mason, under the seal of the Masonic oath.

I suggest a case :—A Mason under the above seal tells me he has forged, swindled, &c. &c., and is now going out of the country ; also, being in distress, he asks me for five pounds. I know that his flight will ruin a dear friend of mine. I know that when the police come to look for him in my house, I shall have to defeat the ends of justice, and tell a lie. Further, that the Brother Mason is positively dangerous to Society. I don't know him otherwise than as a Mason. As a man I have no duties towards him. I point out to Cazell that in this case to be a true Mason I must be a bad citizen. Cazell says, "You put an extreme case!" "I admit that," I return ; "but it is a test case : exceptions prove the rule." Cazell says, "My dear fellow, here common sense steps in ; besides—" here he breaks off cheerfully, and with an air of assured victory—"you can't talk of what Freemasonry really is until you *are* a Freemason. And I can't tell you what it is, because I am under the vows of secresy. You become a Mason and *you'll see.*"

"I've heard," I say in order to show I am not bigoted, "that Masonry is very useful in travelling."

"It is," answers Cazell, decidedly.

"How?'

"How?" he returns. "O! lots of ways." He considers awhile, then he resumes, "Well, it's a passport to Society in some places. It's of great use if you get into a difficulty. You pick up companions; and—in fact—O, there are heaps of instances where Freemasonry has been of the greatest possible service. I recollect a man saying how he was had up before a Magistrate in Naples, and the case was just going against him, when he made a sign to the bench, and the Magistrate returned it. I forget whether he got off or not; but I know that it benefited him—somehow. Why," he continues, hurrying on, as if to avoid being too closely questioned about this last interesting incident, "when I was on the Continent, I was all alone somewhere, and I didn't know what on earth to do with myself; and I found the landlord where I was stopping was a Mason, and so was another fellow staying there, and we got quite chummy, and we had a rubber with dummy in the evening."

Happy Thought (*for a rhyme*)—"Chummy" and "Dummy." *Note* this for future poem on Whist, or on chimney-sweeps; a "chummy" being, I fancy, the slang for a chimney-sweep.

"French, were they?" I inquire, working up an interest in the foregoing exciting story.

"No," he replies, carelessly, "they were English. Only, probably, I shouldn't have chummed with them if they hadn't been Masons. They played whist uncommonly well."

A tap at the door. Then Murgle appears, cautiously.

Murgle always enters a room cautiously, and being innately polite, invariably acknowledges a stranger with a sort of encouraging nod before addressing me. Being also naturally suspicious, he coughs slightly behind his hand, glances from me to my visitor, and from my visitor to me, as though doubtful of my visitor's good faith, and as if uncertain whether he shall say what he has to say out loud now, or ask me to step outside on to the rug. His usual formula is——

"Ahem!"—pause—then, bashfully, with one eye on the visitor looking *at* him *towards* me, "Could I speak to you a minute, Sir?"

"Yes," I answer boldly. "What is it?"

"Ahem!"—pause—a shuffle, then still bashfully, as though afraid lest what he has to say might bring a blush to my friend's cheek, "Mr. Chalvey is at the door, Sir, with a 'orse as he wants you to look at."

Good. I'd rather look at him without Cazell, but it can't be helped.

We follow Murgle.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF A NEW DEAL IN HORSEFLESH WITH CHALVEY THE GIPSY—FURTHER THOUGHTS ON MASONS—ON GIPSIES—MY AUNT'S SUSPICIONS.

R. CHALVEY (at the gate with the Cob in question) is, I believe, professionally, a Gipsy. He is meteoric in his movements, appearing suddenly in our neighbourhood for a few hours, and disappearing as suddenly.

Nobody can tell you precisely whence he comes, or whither he goes. He may be known to the Police, and probably is so, and favourably, too, if I may judge from the few occasions when I've seen Mr. Chalvey in the company of one of the native force. Mr. Chalvey and myself have been on nodding terms for some time past. We have never spoken; but he has invariably touched his fur cap on seeing me, and I have returned his salutation, not only out of politeness, but from a sort of fetish feeling, that I'd better keep on civil terms with Chalvey the Gipsy, or Chalvey the Gipsy will be, somehow or other, one too many for me. In spite of my affable smile and cheery nod to Chalvey in the village, I should *not* like to meet Chalvey alone in a dark lane at night, with nobody within two miles of us. I

certainly couldn't fight Chalvey, with any chance of success; and as certainly he could fight me: or probably, to save trouble, he would knock me down with a life-preserver, which he would, I daresay, have about him, handy. Now here, as Cazell has been saying, there would be an advantage in being a Freemason—I mean, if Chalvey and myself were both Masons. Only, by the way, on a dark night how could we see each other's signs?

Happy Thought.—Squeeze each other's hands.

True; but before we got to this, I should be on the ground, stunned by a life-preserver.

However, not yet being a Mason, and Chalvey being here on quite another business, this discussion can be deferred.

He, Chalvey, is a very much sunburnt man, with a sunburnt fur cap, dried up entirely in some places, and bald in others. He has two jet black shining ringlets framing his walnut brown face, and all round his mouth and over his chin is a deep Prussian blue colour, the result of shaving a powerful beard. Chalvey evidently prides himself on his scrupulous neatness in shaving, and I notice that Murgle keeps his hand up before his own stubbly chin, with a sense of inferiority in this respect. It suddenly occurs to me that now at last (it has often bothered me) I know whom Murgle resembles; he is uncommonly like Chalvey the Gipsy, who might be his elder or younger brother, according as Murgle chose to come out shaved or unshaved. Horse-dealing *does* make one suspicious. And when you've been a seller yourself, you become, from experience, more suspicious than

ever. It strikes me that Murgle and Chalvey are conspiring. I fancy that they are both Gipsies ; which is worse, I imagine, than being Freemasons, as they have signs and a language of their own impossible for me to understand.

Happy Thought.—On guard.

Cazell critical. Murgle dubious as to which side he's to take. Chalvey steady, but indifferent, apparently, to results. Myself watchful all round. Chalvey opens the ceremonies with a respectful touch of his cap. This from a Gipsy, a being free as the air, owning no sovereign (this by the way, pecuniarily speaking, is highly probable), with a tribe at his beck and call, ought to be reassuring. But it isn't. The fact is, I have a sort of notion that if Gipsy Chalvey were to give a peculiar whistle, heads of Gipsies—the heads of the tribe—would pop up in every direction; probably with a chorus. That's *my* idea of Gipsies. My Aunt, who has returned home suddenly, and has been, unknown to me till now, surveying the scene from her bed-room window, has *her* notion of Gipsies in connection with chickens, and infant æeirs to vast estates. She calls to me, and "wonders how on earth I can have anything to do with that suspicious-looking man," meaning Chalvey.

"For goodness' sake," she says, "do get rid of him as quickly as possible, or we sha'n't have a chicken left in the place."

I assure her (entirely against my own conviction) that Gipsies are the most harmless people, and beg her not to be frightened. She refuses to retire from the window, being

determined to watch Chalvey's movements closely, and be ready to send for the police at the slightest intimation of treachery on his part. She tells me in an undertone that, walking from the station to our cottage, she has noticed several suspicious looking characters about.

At this time of year when the days have drawn in, my Aunt always sees suspicious looking people about in the lanes. I return to Chalvey, who comes to business at once.

CHAPTER XXIV.

I DEAL WITH GIPSY CHALVEY, BEFORE WITNESSES—MY AUNT'S OPINION—SYMPTOMS OF A COLD.

HALVEY has a careless, jaunty, way with him,—a sort of take-it-or-leave-it kind of air,—and he begins by impressing me with the obligation I am under to him for bringing the cob for my inspection.

"I heard as you wanted something of this sort, so, as I was just passing through, I thought as I'd show him to you. There's Mr. Applethwaite sweet on him, but I fancy as he'll have a better place with a gentleman like you, Sir."

What can I say to this? Nothing. Mr. Applethwaite is a substantial farmer, a very substantial farmer, indeed, weighing quite eighteen stone, and able to buy me and my Aunt, Murgle, and the whole lot of us, and lead us into slavery, if the law of the land happened to permit it.

Happy Thought.—Mr. Applethwaite, mounted, *would* look "sweet on him."

So this remark of the Gipsy's *is* a genuine compliment,

and the more genuine and the more valuable, as coming from a wanderer, a rover like Chalvey. It's as much as to say to me, "You see, Sir, though I'm only a queer sort of customer myself, yet I knows a gentleman when I sees one; and bless you, I sees one afore me now," meaning myself. I try to steel my heart against the implied flattery, and go at once to the cob's knees.

"O, bless you," says Mr. Chalvey with a laugh, "*he's* not been down, couldn't throw him down, not if you was to try your harderest. He's a wonder, he is. Do anything a'most. Jump a rumbreller, or a stick, or anything 'eld afore him; never refuses, and safe everywhere."

"He'd suit *me* with hounds?" I suggest. I see Cazell smile. This annoys me, because why should Cazell see anything ridiculous in my going out "with hounds?" There's nothing ridiculous in my going out *without* hounds. Then why—but this requires thinking out, and, at the present time, business is business.

"Carry you, Sir!" exclaims Chalvey, in admiration. "He's the very thing you want, I should say. Only, Sir," here he assumes a resolute air, "if you was to say to me, look here, Mr. Chalvey, here's a hundred pounds to find me a cob as'll carry me safe with 'ounds, I couldn't bring you a better than this 'ere."

Murgle coughs, nods approval, looks inquiringly at Cazell, and then shifts his leg, as though he had not, as yet, exactly made up his mind on the subject.

"Strong?" I observe to Murgle.

"Yes, Sir, he's a strong 'un, he is," replies Murgle, evi-

dently taking his cue from me. Again he shifts his leg, and coughs dubiously.

Now what *I* want is that Murgle, or Cazell, or both, should pick out the animal's defects. I confess to being pleased with him. And I own I do *not* see where his faults are. I hate a friend who knows something about it, to turn up afterwards and say, "um, rather down in the fetlock—low in the forehand—seen a good deal of work," and so forth.

Happy Thought.—Ask what's his age.

Chalvey replies frankly, "Well, Sir, I don't want to deceive you; you can see for yourself."

He means I am to look into the horse's mouth, and judge by his teeth. Certainly mustn't show ignorance; or nervousness.

Happy Thought.—Tell Murgle to open the horse's mouth.

Murgle does so awkwardly. I look at his teeth, and down his throat, and at the roof of his mouth as long as the horse will stand it. I don't know what I'm looking at. His teeth appear to have been neglected for some time. My first impulse is to say to Chalvey, "I rather think he ought to go to a dentist"—however, I know *that* isn't "horsey," so I say in an off-hand manner, "Well, he's not very young." Murgle, who, I thought, would have told me exactly, merely coughs, looks more stupid than usual, and says, "No, he ain't not azackly young."

I am annoyed and disappointed with Murgle. His business is, what is called on the Stage, when one man plays

two parts in the same piece, to "double" the Groom and the Gardener. *Now*, when I want him to come out as the Groom and be horsey, he insists upon appearing in his favourite *rôle* of the Gardener, and being more of a vegetable than usual. The reverse of this is, that when he ought to be mowing or sowing, he is either cleaning the harness or making a round of his own private calls on other gardeners and a few public-house keepers, which social proceeding he describes to me as "being obliged to exercise the 'oss."

As a judge of a horse, or of a horse's age, Murgle, at this minute, is of as much use as my gate-post.

"Rising five," says Chalvey, protesting, "that ain't old."

"No," returns that idiot Murgle, sagely shaking his stupid sheep's head, "he ain't old neither."

Happy Thought.—Chalvey is aware that Murgle and myself have as much idea of that horse's age as the man in the moon. So I say knowingly, "Ah, he's more than five."

"Well," says Chalvey, "there's as much work in him as you'll want, Sir, for the next ten or twelve years. P'raps you'd like to try him."

"No, thank you."

Happy Thought.—Wait until I can do it quietly, without spectators.

Cazell says, "O, you'd better try him. You ought to try him."

"Would you like to take him over a hurdle in the field then, Sir?" asks Chalvey.

I should, very much, if I were certain the result would be effective and satisfactory.

"You'd better," says Cazell, who expects to see an accident, and thinks it funny.

Happy Thought.—Chalvey can try himself. I can quite sufficiently judge of him by that.

Chalvey does try him. Murgle holds a broom, then an umbrella, and Chalvey (who actually rides him bare backed!) takes him over both. Canters, trots, walks, jumps him over a hurdle. All most satisfactory. The Cob is very clever, and will be most useful.

He appears to go so easily over the hurdle and the other things, that I am very nearly trying him myself. But I defer the experiment. I feel somehow that when I've bought and paid for him, and have acquired a right to ride him, that there'll be less chance of my coming off. I don't know why I think this, but so it is. Possession is nine points of staying in the saddle.

Happy Thought.—Now for harness.

Murgle says, coughing, that, "Unfortintely the trap 'as gone to be mended that wery afternoon, and won't be back afur night."

Will Chalvey leave the Cob?

No, he can't: very sorry, but he can't. He's off to Sussex this evening, and if Mr. Applethwaite don't have him, he knows a party near Lewes as'll give double the money for him.

"He has been in harness, I suppose?" I ask, not liking to lose the chance of buying such a clever cob as this.

"Has been in 'arness!" exclaims Chalvey. "Only look at his neck, Sir! If it worn't for them collar-marks I shouldn't be arkxing the low price I am for him. The hair will grow in time, and it'll come all right. But they must ha' druv him rayther 'ard in some cart or other."

Yes, evidently. There are the marks of the collar. Regularly worn off the hair. No doubt. "He must have been in harness," I say to Cazell.

Cazell is sure of it, or how did the collar-marks come there?

Quite so. That's all satisfactory. I really don't care about inquiring as to his soundness. I know what *I* should say if I were selling him. I look upon all questions as to soundness as mere formalities. The price is the point.

Chalvey wants twenty-five guineas.

(Not more! I *am* pleased.)

Happy Thought.—Look frowningly, and shake my head.

Cazell (bother him) says, "Cheap at the price." He further suggests that I can make my money out of him over and over again as a trick pony, with umbrellas.

"Likewise," chimes in Chalvey, "for trotting matches."

Happy Thought.—Give up literature, and take to trick ponies and trotting matches. Might do a profitable provincial tour, riding the cob myself, and betting on his performances.

Chalvey expatiates upon the reasons why he has asked so little, and apparently is already on the point of regretting his price, and either taking him away, or adding another tenner to the sum just mentioned, when occurs to me

Happy Thought.—Close with him at once.

Business is business. Cheque on the spot, Chalvey being in a hurry to get off to Sussex, and having several horse accounts to make up, and being considerably out of pocket by, &c., &c.

He takes cheque, and gives receipt, that is, makes a mark to a form which I pen for him, bids us good-day, and Murgle leads the new purchase to the stable.

"Not dear," I say to Cazell, as we re-enter the house.

"No," returns Cazell, meditatively. Presently he says, "I dare say there is a sporting butcher, or publican, in the neighbourhood who'd make trotting and jumping matches with you. Might get a heap of tin out of 'em."

"Quite enough, too," says my Aunt, on hearing the price. She doesn't like the Gipsy, and hopes we locked the gate and looked round the garden everywhere.

"If it *is* cheap," she continues, "that man didn't come by him honestly. You may depend upon it that horse you've just bought is *stolen*."

I am just going to reply somewhat sharply, being annoyed, when I am interrupted by myself sneezing.

"There," says my Aunt, severely, "you've caught cold from standing outside without your hat."

CHAPTER XXV.

HORSE CAN'T GO OUT—I CAN'T—IT'S COLD—THE NEW JOB AND HIS FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

S the rain comes on suddenly, and the trap has not yet returned from being mended, the new horse can't be tried. I ask Murgle "why the trap went to be mended." He answers, "Well you see, Sir, it shifted itself like ; it 'ud ha' come down all a one side soon, it would."

Suddenly I find that I am not well.

I know it myself. So does my Aunt. Only she does not consider it in so serious a light as *I* do. She sets it down at once to "a cold."

"I told you what it would be," she says, "you would go outside that gate to talk with that man Chalvey without putting anything on your head, or round your throat, and so you've caught cold."

Her remedies are, feet in hot water at night, hot rum before going to bed, and "jump into bed directly you've drank it, and keep yourself well covered up." This, I admit, is admirable as far as it goes. I don't know how far the rum goes, but that depends upon quantity.

Besides, I tried this remedy once, and not being accustomed to spirits, least of all rum, and finding it uncommonly nice, I took three doses of it, one after the other. On this occasion I certainly kept myself well covered up at night, for I found myself in bed with my boots on in the morning. *My cold had gone, however.*

So as my first attempt at a medical note-book, to be entitled, *Every Man his own Doctor*, specially suitable for this time of year, I put down

Happy Thought (for receipt).—Go to bed with your boots on. Also don't wind up your watch at night. I didn't. And what's more, I don't exactly know how or when I got into bed. I mention these details because they must form part of a cure for a cold: as most certainly I was cured.

The above too is a recipe for getting up with a slight headache the next morning; but this does not detract from its value as a remedy for removing a cold. I forgot to mention, though this will be understood by a careful perusal of the foregoing remarks, that the patient must begin by drinking plenty of rum, hot and strong, *before he takes his boots off.* Otherwise, he'll never get to bed in his boots, and this I consider to be the most important item in the cure.

However, as I said before, and as I feel now, I am *not* well.

I haven't exactly got a headache, and yet I am not free from headache.

I haven't got a regular cough, and yet I am not free from

an irregular cough. The cough is horridly exasperating for one minute—twists me about till I feel like a limp corkscrew —not that this can convey any idea to anyone of my particular sensation, so I will say, as I do to Boodells, who happens to look in (being in the neighbourhood), that I experience a sensation like what I can imagine a chicken would feel whose neck had been only half wrung, and who had been left on a lawn to revive as best he could.

Boodells is not much of a fellow to come and see you when you're ill. It is not that he is exactly *un*sympathetic, but he has always had everything you've got now, himself, a long time ago, and pretends to make nothing of it.

He is full of how *he* treats himself when he is taken just in the same way. He says to me, "My dear fellow, *you* give way so. Why, I have a cough for more than half the year, twice as bad as what you've got now, and *I* never lay up for it."

Then I don't believe that his was ever half or a quarter as bad as mine, or he wouldn't be here now to tell me of it. Boodells would have been done for long ago. I tell him that I suffer agonies at intervals. He won't believe it, because he doesn't see me pale, emaciated, and writhing on a bed of sickness.

I am sitting before a fire in my armchair, and (I admit it —I can't help admitting it, much as I regret it) looking uncommonly well. That's the worst of me; however ill I am, I invariably look well, and always look better, and feel better, too, when a Doctor comes, just at the very minute when I really *do* want to give him a specimen of how bad I can be.

And why does a Doctor—I mean my Doctor—always come at meal-times, just as I'm sitting down to be comfortable?

You can't, I mean I can't, suddenly lie back helplessly in an armchair, pale and gasping, in a brocaded dressing-gown and a shirt open at the collar (like Louis the Fourteenth at a bedchamber reception) when there's a steaming cut off the joint with vegetables and a decanter of Claret before you. You can't say, "O, Doctor, I'm so ill" in the face of such a luncheon, or a late breakfast of similar dimensions. You must feel that to do so would irritate him into sending you the nastiest draught he could make up, and, so to speak, giving you something to be ill for. A sort of practical black draught joke on his part, in return for being taken away from his dinner, or his luncheon, or a day's outing somewhere, by a false alarm. I don't think that doctors, as a rule, would be revengeful. They are among the few people to whom I would subscribe for a testimonial.

I tell Boodells that I have no appetite for breakfast.

"Bah!" he returns, quite contemptuously, "why I haven't known what it is to make a breakfast for *years*."

"Yes," I object, rather pettishly [I feel it *is* pettish—N.B. Make a note of this for my new book, *Queries of Humanity*, vol. i., under the head of "Small Causes"—why provoked by nothing, &c.? *big subjects*], "but I am accustomed to eat a large breakfast, and when I fall off, it must be serious."

"Nonsense," returns Boodells, "you've only got a slight cold, and are bilious. I dare say you over-ate yourself one day."

Now I *am* annoyed. Because if there is *one* thing which I have *not* done it is to have over-eaten myself.

Happy Thought.—Not worth replying to. Silence speaks contempt. The advantage of being a little distance from town in a real country place (such as is ours where my Aunt's cottage is situated) is that, when you are ill, your friends can come out to see you, and spend an hour or so with you.

Boodells said, when he arrived, that if I didn't mind he'd stop to dinner. I was delighted, and said "of course." But if he's going to talk so unsympathetically I really should be glad if he went away, unless he is going to alter his tone. Odd though, this sort of quarrel, or little difference with him, has made me feel decidedly better. I have been irritated, and this has roused me.

It is annoying to be better when you've sent post-cards to friends to come and see how ill you are. I expect Milburd and Cazell: also the Doctor. If they all arrive and find me not only quite well, but having a lively row with Boodells, they'll think I'm a humbug. They won't consider that it's only a momentary flash in the pan (so to speak) and that next minute I shall be worse than ever. They'll simply say, "O, you're all right!" Even Job himself would have lost patience in the same situation. [On reconsideration, if *his* friends had come in and found him having a row with another friend, of course Job would have already lost his patience: so that *that* parallel, excellent as it appeared at first sight, won't stand. Add this as a note to my *Queries of Humanity*, under the head of Job.]

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONTINUATION OF COLD—FRIENDS IN CONSULTATION—TRYING A REMEDY.

O. I cannot get rid of my cold. I seem to myself to have such a cold as nobody ever had before, or since, the Deluge, till now.

I select the Deluge as the era of the introduction of colds and chills.

Happy Thought.—Good notion for a new subject for Bishop Colenso. By the way, how startling the first sneeze must have been. Wonder what the sneezer himself thought of it. If Dr. Colenso could get a scientific physician to collaborate on *History of Cold from its Origin up to the Present Time*, they'd get on wonderfully, when they both, so to speak, warmed to the work.

It is a comfort to an invalid when he finds his friends attentive.

Boodells is already here. He tells me how bad he himself has been for years ; how much worse than myself he is at this present moment. This *he* calls "cheering me up." I call it irritating to the last degree. In effect he seems to be

holding himself up as a beautiful example for my imitation. "Look at me," he seems to say. "I'm twice as ill as you are, yet *I* don't give in, like *you* do. *I* don't lie down and moan as *you* do. I don't send for a doctor merely for a cough or a cold."

I am silent. He doesn't understand me, and he doesn't really know what it is for a healthy man to be ill. If *he* is always unhealthy, it is his normal state, and he is accustomed to it. Besides, I am engaged on a book, *Queries of Humanity*, which requires brain-work. Boodells is not so engaged. On the contrary, he has nothing to do but to roam about his garden, ask the Head Gardener "What's up?" order the Assistant Gardener to move a shrub from the left corner to the right corner, ascertain (for himself) what may be the temperature of the Orchid-house, look in, through a sort of peep-show window in the hive, to see how the bees are getting on, feed a couple of plethoric ducks, look over a gate (in safety) at a suspicious cow, and, once in so many years, drag the pond. Generally speaking, I should call *his* drain-work, as contrasting with mine, *i.e.*, brain-work.

As for Milburd, I dread his coming, as he takes a comic view of every ailment; he, also, means to "cheer me up."

When he *does* come, however, he is very sympathetic—at first. Gradually, becoming accustomed to my complaints, he is inclined to suggest comic, or, rather, pantomimic remedies. He proposes the red-hot poker to begin with. Seeing the warming-pan in the room, he can't refrain from going through such "comic business," he calls it, "as old Payne would do if he had a cold in the opening of a panto-

mime." He entreats Boodells to join him in a comic scene, just to "cheer me up." I smile languidly. I feel I cannot enter into the spirit of his fun. I would prefer reading a grave philosophical treatise on *Fortuitous Atoms*, and dropping off to sleep.

Cazell arives. After him Englemore, who, on entering the room, salutes me with, "Hallo, Colonel! Invalided?"

Really I never had so much excitement when I was in the best possible health. Its quite an "At Home."

Cazell scrutinises me. He knows at once what it is, and what I ought to do. "My dear fellow," he answers, on hearing my symptoms, "that's liver. That cough isn't from cold only; it's liver."

Boodells becomes interested, and cuts in with the remark that it seems to him like biliousness. "I'm a very bilious subject," he adds, speaking of himself, "and I'm often like that."

Cazell won't give in. He won't hear of biliousness. Liver, he says, is the cause of it all. "My dear boy," he argues, "I *ought* to know. I studied medicine for two years."

"And were obliged to leave off directly you began to practise it," says Milburd. "Eh?"

Everyone thinks this observation ill-timed.

It suddenly occurs to me that if Cazell is right, my doctor, who calls it "a violent cold, and just a touch of slight bronchitis," is wrong. Boodells is all attention—really interested in Cazell's dissertation; and Milburd, finding his jokes at a discount, assumes the air of a serious inquirer. Englemore shakes his head, and is understood to suggest "Mister

Mustard Plaster;" but he gives in to Cazell, who is in his element, while telling us what it is and what I ought to do.

"You feel languid!" he says.

I do. I own it.

"Of course you do," he continues, triumphantly. "You have a pain in your right hypochondrium; you have a nasty, troublesome cough——" (I nod my head. He *is* right.) "You experience some difficulty in breathing——"

"Not much," I interpose. Englemore murmurs something about "Benjamin Bellows;" but as this does not appear to have any more than a merely marginal reference to the subject in hand, Cazell goes on deprecatingly,

"No, not *much: that* is, in an advanced stage. Now you *have* a difficulty of which you are scarcely conscious, and it arises from secretions of mucus in the bronchial tubes, which anyone can ascertain by percussion, and by the sounds of sonorous and sibilant rhonchi in the first stage. Then, of course, if the central canal won't act, and the biliary ducts can't do their duty, the whole system gets out of order, and can only be restored by the greatest care."

I begin to think I am *very* ill—much worse than I had expected to find myself. Even Boodells, by his change of manner, seems tacitly to acknowledge, that, at last, I have outdone him, and that I am really an invalid.

I am not skilled in medical terms, but, after Cazell's lecture, I am so depressed in one sense, and yet so cheered in another (that is, to find that I am worthy of commiseration, and not the feeble-minded yielder to a pain in my little finger that Boodells would have made me out to be) that I am in-

clined to send for my Aunt, and say, "Aunt, Doctor Bloomer was all wrong. I've got something the matter with my hypochondrium, my mucous membrane isn't at all the thing, my biliary ducts are not going on properly, and I require the greatest care, or else, as my system is quite out of order, there's no knowing what may happen."

My Aunt enters just as Milburd is putting the pertinent inquiry, "What's the remedy?"

Cazell, still in his element, replies at once, "Remain quiet in an atmosphere of a uniform temperature; keep the internal fire well supplied, and the circulation up to the mark: don't get into draughts: nourishing food and easy of digestion. And," turning to me, "you ask your doctor for a prescription of calomel, nitra-muriatic acid, hydriodate of potass, taraxacum, and soda, a dose of ipecacuanha, a gentle alterative, and on the first opportunity get away for change of air. You'll find I'm right."

Milburd is the first to recover himself after this.

He says, alluding to me, "He ought to use a cold water compress every night."

"Where?" I ask.

"O, anywhere," he answers vaguely; "wherever you feel it would do you good."

"Diet's everything," says Boodells, emphatically. Cazell admits that it *is* important.

Englemore, silent up to this point, chimes in. He puts it in his own peculiar way.

"Yes, Sir,"—he is fond of assuming the American style when he wants to be forcible and yet playful, or it would be

more correct to call this his amusingly instructive style. "Yes, *Sir*," he goes on, "little Dicky Diet is your man to keep Master Stumjack in order." (Stumjack, he explains, is the Christy-Minstrel-Drawing-room phrase for politely alluding to the st-m-ch. This is his delicacy in my Aunt's presence.) "Dicky Diet's your man," he says, putting his hands in his trowsers pockets and rattling some keys by way of an accompaniment. "Take Matthew Mutton well done, hot. Victoria Vegetable's not a bad girl in moderation. Finish up with little Tommy Tonic. Picking up, Sir, that's what the Colonel wants."

By Colonel he means *me*.

"I've always heard," my Aunt observes, "that Champagne is an excellent thing for a cold."

"Quite right, Ma'am. When this insect"—we understand him as alluding to himself—"has the snivelicis in the head, he finds that, for a regular pick up, there's nothing so good as the remedy of Peter Pommery, extra dry, and drink nothing else till you go to Mr. Lullaby. Next morning up with the lark, Corporal Cold and Brigadier Bronchitis off the scene. No mustard plasters need apply."

This suggestion of a remedy seems to restore us all to good spirits, excepting Cazell, who will have it that there's a deposit of sugar in all Champagne, which must do—I don't exactly catch what—"to the" (I think he says) "hypochondrium."

All my friends have to go away, except Englemore, who says he can stop to dine, merely, he puts it, as a medical adviser.

We adopt his prescription.

Happy Thought.—Pommery, extra dry, for dinner.

My Aunt says *she* feels better for the Champagne: so do I. Englemore is obliged to go back to Town by the last train. His dieting has resulted in what he calls "Peter Pommery" at dinner, and William Whisky, hot, with cigars, afterwards. He says, "My dear Colonel, as long as you fancy it, that's good enough for you."

After his departure the effervescence of the Champagne, and the stimulus of the whisky and cigar, seem to have gone too.

I begin to meditate whether it has been a beneficial remedy or not. Samuel Sleep will decide. But I must get well, because I want to try that new horse in the trap.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A RESTLESS NIGHT.

APPY THOUGHT.—Before going to bed, to place by the bedside small table, with candles, matches, and writing materials; so that, in case I pass a sleepless night, I may make some notes for my *Queries of Humanity*.

My Aunt, who is very anxious about me just now, has taken up her abode for the night in the room next to mine. It is divided from my room by a thin partition, "Which," my Aunt has pointed out to me, in making the new arrangement, "is an advantage; because if you are at all restless, or want anything in the night, you've only to call me—I shall hear you at once."

It is very kind and considerate of her. Her great object is to prevent my getting out of bed and catching a fresh cold.

Happy Thought.—I feel so drowsy, the effect, I fancy, of the combined remedies proposed by Englemore, that I am happily certain of being asleep almost the moment after lying down in bed.

I am just dropping off, when I am suddenly aroused by the

most awful sound, as of a person struggling for life in a choking fit.

It lasts a few seconds, then ceases.

It occurs to me, awaking, all at once, to vivid consciousness, that this is my Aunt snoring.

The last line of a nursery rhyme flashes across me, "Let us hope little Billy won't do it again." Substituting "Aunty" for "Billy," the quotation is admirably adapted to the present circumstances.

Already I have had the drowsiness taken out of me by merely this first snore.

Happy Thought.—Subject for a picture—"*Her First Snore.*" The picture should exhibit the intensity of *her* snore by the expression of *his* face.

I should never have thought, but for this expression, that one could have heard snoring so distinctly through a partition which is, at least, a wall of lath and plaster. If I recollect rightly, a thoroughgoing liar is proverbially described as one who could "lie through a deal board or a brick wall." This would suit a snorer of extraordinary powers. As the night goes on, I am inclined to say of my Aunt, "She can snore through a brick wall."

If she would only make her intervals longer between her snores there might be some chance of my getting off to sleep between the last note of snore Number One and the commencement of the first bar of snore Number Two.

Thoughts while lying awake.—I've heard old nurses, and people who, three hundred years since, would have been

termed "neighbours" and "gossips," call snoring "driving pigs to market," but I cannot see the aptitude of the illustration.

[*Happy Thought.*—I like encouraging myself to get into a train of thought like this, as it generally results in the train running off the main line, and, after travelling through the vague country of muddle head, shunting itself into a sleepy siding and there remaining happily unconscious till morning.]

For instance, there's my Aunt at it again. She has begun exactly at the very moment when I feel that had I been only left to myself I should have been asleep.

Pigs going to market, indeed! Not a bit like it.

Now it seems as though, somehow or other, she were getting a corkscrew out of her throat. Up it's coming, gradually, gradually, the tone becoming more acute each time, and the key of the snore sharper and sharper, by what seems to be increased tension. I almost expect to hear something go pop. Shall I wake her up? Shall I knock at the wall? Would a sudden waking start have an ill effect on her? Perhaps I'd better not. I'll bear it. I'll fight against it, with my eyes shut.

Happy Thought.—Since sleep won't come to me, I must go to sleep.

Incentives.—I think of Shakespeare's lines about sleep. Count a hundred backwards. My pillow has become hot and feverish.

Happy Thought.—Turn it.

The cool side of the pillow refreshes me. Now then for Shakespeare again. "Sleep, gentle sleep, Nature's soft nurse how have I frighted thee"——

A snore comes like a bradawl right through the partition and into my ear. It resembles nothing so much as the swearing of a cat, and the sharp, spiteful growl of a small, snappish dog, combined.

I *can't* sleep. It's no good. I can't.

Happy Thought.—Strike the light lucifer.

See what the time is * * * Two ! ! * * * I shall be worse to-morrow. There's another snore, with a sigh * * * I really must knock and remonstrate * * * There's another. It must be painful to *her:* and yet *she* is asleep, enjoying herself, and I am becoming more and more feverish every minute * * * Now the snoring is regular, as though, after all these attempts, she had, so to speak, got into her stride, and settled down to exactly what she wanted * * * I *must* stop it * * * I knock softly * * * No answer * * * Another knock * * * Snoring aggravated * * * I am losing my temper * * * A loud and sharp knock from me—a loud, jerky, pop-gunny, soda-water-bottle-cork-coming-out snore from her. She has awoke.

"My dear Aunt," I say, with my lips at the wall, "I *do* wish you wouldn't snore so."

"My dear," she returns, quite clearly, "I wasn't snoring. It was *you*."

This is too much.

"My dear Aunt," I remonstrate, "why, I wasn't even asleep."

She answers: I daresay you *think* you weren't asleep, but your snoring awoke me some time ago, and I've been awake ever since. *I never snore.*"

The case is beyond argument, unless I could wake her up to catch herself snoring. I suggest that she should not go to sleep for the next quarter of an hour, as I haven't had a wink all night.

Happy Thought.—Drop off before she snores.

She promises.

"Very well, dear. You're sure you don't want anything?"

"No, thank you," I reply; "only *that.* Let me get to sleep first this time."

"Very well, dear. I hope you'll be better to-morrow."

I turn on my right side. I shut my eyes. Now I feel that Morpheus, drowsy god——

"K-r-r-r-r-r-r-q-w-a-r——"

My Aunt again, with variations on a corkscrew and a policeman's rattle. I turn round sharply. She has broken the truce. I rap at the wall.

"Aunt, *do* be quiet."

Her voice, mildly and drowsily: "Yes, dear. I'm not snoring. *I know when I do, and I'll stop myself.*"

This is satisfactory as far as it goes, but it only goes just so far as to give me time to turn, and then——

"Krrrrr-quarrr-queeee-quarr——"

Pigs, ducks, geese, corkscrews, saws, and soda-water-bottles suddenly opened, all in one snorer's battery. "'Tis grand to have a giant's strength"—I forget the remainder of the quotation, but fancy it is, "and use it like a lamb." She evidently does not know her power.

Happy Thought.—The Champion Snorer.

I give up sleep as a bad job, "for this night only," as the play-bills say. It certainly shan't occur again.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CLEVER COB IN HARNESS—A FAIR TRIAL—ITS RESULT.

NTRY IN DIARY.—"Cold gone. Winter nearly over, but not quite made up its mind. Horrid weather lately."

Happy Thought.—Hope Spring will turn over a new leaf.

Further Entry.—"Shall try clever horse in trap to-day. He's not been out for some time."

Happy Thought.—Make Murgle exercise him for two hours before *I* drive him.

Murgle takes the order, and pretends to like the idea. They go out together; Murgle on his back, saying, "Woa, then!" and patting him. Boy stops in his work to look after him going down the lane. Murgle is three parts Gardener, and the remainder Groom. I hope the remainder will stick on tight. If it doesn't, Murgle will be brought back *all Gardener.*

Cazell here. Thinks I'm quite right to risk Murgle to commence with. "When he comes back," I say, "we'll try the horse in the trap."

I say "we," meaning Cazell and myself. I do not intend to go alone. I do not know why I should feel safer with Cazell than without, but somehow it seems to divide the danger. I keep the word "danger" to myself.

Cazell observes, dubiously, "The horse *has* been in harness, eh?"

I reply, "O, yes. There's the mark of the collar, that hasn't worn off yet."

I own this is *not* perfectly satisfactory to me, and it wasn't when I bought him. Still, I hadn't the opportunity of trying him then, as the gipsy would have sold him to some one else, the trap was being repaired, and the horse was, I must admit that, a real bargain. Before, or since, I have not met his equal for jumping over umbrellas and garden-seats on a lawn, and for a spanking trot with his neck arched, and his nose touching his knees. I should say for riding he is safety itself, except when he gives a kind of hitch up behind—a sort of flank movement—as though he had got on sailor's trousers that didn't exactly fit him.

Murgle returns safe and sound. He has been out exactly two hours. He is *so* punctual in his return, and appears so uncommonly fresh himself, looking quite the Jolly Gardener on horseback (a good name for an inn, by the way), that I fancy a happy thought must have occurred to Murgle, when he had once turned the corner and got out of sight, to this effect:—

Murgle (*to himself*).—Master wants me to be out for two hours with the hoss.

O

His Happy Thonght.—Go to the "Blue Man," 'ave a pint myself, give 'arf a pint to Jim the 'ostler, and let *'im* go out a hexercising.

Murgle's *Second Happy Thought* (*on returning*).—Done it.

We are ready. So is the trap. The clever cob is in it—I mean in his right place, of course. Cazell will be in it soon, and I fancy, from his manner, wishes himself well out of it. If I don't fancy it from his manner, I judge from my own feelings on the subject. Still, with a reputation to keep up before my man, Murgle, my Aunt, and a friend who has heard me *talk* a good deal on the subject, I am bound to try this horse in his trap—or some trap.

It is a light waggonnette: seats for two in front, and a well behind, which you can get into, or out of (a great point this latter), while the vehicle is in motion. My Aunt wants to join our party. I refuse her. I feel that this is noble, manly, and self-sacrificing. In short, I have a presentiment that something is going to happen. Cazell mounts to his seat, I to mine. With one nervous hand I take the reins; in my other the whip. I keep my eye on the cob, as if I were fishing, and the whip were my fly-rod.

(*Happy Thought, for Note at another time, not now.*—Spare the rod and spoil the stream. Think it out, and put it epigrammatically).

"You'd better," I say to Murgle, with the air of an old horse-breaking hand starting in a break from some swell

London Livery Stables, "you'd better run at his head for awhile—at first."

Cazell holds on by the rail at his side. I see him. I also notice that he draws his knees in, as if for a spring out on the first opportunity. Odd, I feel far less nervous when driving, myself, than when sitting by a driver. I appreciate Cazell's situation. There's some excitement for the driver; there's only anxiety for the passenger. Cazell is silent; it evidently occurs to him that he had better not distract my attention by telling me (as he otherwise would inevitably have done some time ago) "what I ought to do." He clearly considers it better not to speak to the man at the wheel.

Anything but a Happy Thought.—I may be the man *under* the wheel, before we've done.

The horse goes capitally. No objection to harness; no objection to the sound of the wheels behind him: no objection to Murgle at his head, but can do perfectly without him; his nose is well down towards his knees, his neck arched, he is warming to his work, and stepping along to a sort of steady common time, only slightly increasing in pace, which would take us along anything like a level road at the rate of twelve miles an hour. So far—that is after half a mile of this, and safely round a corner—(*Happy Thought.*—No objection to corners)—I say to Murgle, "You can jump in behind." He does so without our relaxing speed. I like this, because I have a notion, that, if once checked in his career, he might decline to start again on the same pleasant

footing we are on at present. We breathe again. Cazell's legs come out, and stretch themselves freely; Cazell's hand gives up its hold of the iron railing; and Cazell's eyes begin to enjoy the country. Cazell will soon be so much at home, that he will be giving me advice as to "what I ought to do."

Happy Thought.—He can't, after this exhibition of superiority and skill, give *me* advice as to driving. Murgle will fill the surrounding villages with tales of his master's pluck. I shall have established a horsey reputation. But it *is* gratifying to know that I have got here a real right-down bargain both for riding and driving.

Cazell pulls out a cigar-case.

"I was a little nervous at first," he says, pleasantly.

"Well," I admit, "*I* wasn't *quite* certain about him. That's why I wouldn't let my Aunt come. Women fidget, and make one so nervous."

"O yes they do," Cazell replies, pulling out a Vesuvian.

I stop him. I think he'd better not strike it yet; it might startle the horse, who's going on uncommonly well just now. Cazell defers smoking under protest.

"Why," says he, "you might let off cannons in his ears, he wouldn't mind."

"Well, Murgle," I say to him in the well behind, "if he always goes up-hill like this, and can come down-hill safe at the same pace, we shan't be an hour getting up to Town from my house.

"No, Sir, that we shan't," answers Murgle, wagging his

head, and appearing solemnly surprised at finding himself still in his place uninjured.

We are going up a hill beautifully!!! It is quite a pleasure to sit behind him!! And, as he is the surest-footed beast possible, coming down the hill on the other side will be simply perfect!! Bravo! I *am* in luck!! I wouldn't part with this horse not for a hundred pounds!! This *is* a bargain!!

We are on the summit.

I say to Cazell, cheerfully, "There's rather a sharpish pitch here"—meaning that the decline is very sudden, and that he musn't be astonished if, with such a magnificent stepper, I take this opportunity of showing him how "he ought to go down-hill."

Down the "sharpish pitch."

A rumbling of wheels—the trap slipping forward on to the horse's back—a tremendous whack on the dash-board in front, as if it had been attacked with a sledge-hammer—sudden flash of supposition that this blow must have come from the horse—supposition becomes conviction on the unexpected and awful appearance of the hind-quarters of the animal high up in the air, then of two apparently gigantic hoofs, whose size seems to have been exaggerated by a hundred magnifying-glass power!! Bang! bang!—dash-board gone—heels higher up than ever—reins anywhere—whip nowhere. I hear my own voice, as if it were somebody else's, shouting wildly, "Murgle!! get out behind!!" Bang! bang! My knee somehow or other just escapes the enormous hoofs, which are now being flourished furiously

over my head—we are swaying to the right—to the left—up like a swing. Bang! bang! Gigantic hoofs again!—rolling like a ship! I am conscious of still holding the reins firmly, and pulling him towards a ditch on the left. Bang! crash!—and, in another half-millionth quarter of a second, there comes a tremendous rattling bang—we have arrived at, so to speak, our last kick—everything gives way in every direction, and in a sort of grand final display of crackling fireworks, we are, in one sudden explosion, sent flying up, all compact at first, like a sky-rocket, then dividing, and dropped out here and there, and being conscious the whole time of gigantic horses' legs waving about, coruscating horses' hoofs, wheels whizzing, wood snapping, and glass breaking, until to all this there suddenly succeeds a moment of the deepest tranquillity, broken only by the convulsive snorting of the clever cob, who is lying on his side in a ditch, with Murgle in a pious attitude kneeling on his head, while all that is visible of the trap are four wheels in the air—and I take this all in at a glance as I lie on my back in the road, with a torn coat, a smashed hat, and the broken reins still in my hand; while Cazell, also hatless, is seated on a bank, with his knees drawn up as though meditating bathing, and wondering whether the water were warm enough or not; his scared look conveying the notion of a gentleman who had been called too early for the train and wanted to go to sleep again.

Happy Thought (*for ourselves*).—Alive. (*Same for the Horse*)—Alive and still (slightly) kicking.

* * * * * *

Shaken and shaking.

Cazell, at my request, takes Murgle's place—sits on the horse's head, while Murgle, also at my request, begins to undo the harness in the vicinity of those hind legs.

Happy Thought.—Murgle had better do this: not myself. Horse knows Murgle, and will let him touch him without kicking him. This wouldn't apply to me. Besides, his hind legs still appear to be spasmodic.

I superintend operations. Horse not hurt. Shafts broken. One side of trap stove in. Lamps smashed. What's to be done?

Happy Thought (*suggested by* Cazell).—Sit down and smoke a pipe. We do so, and send Murgle home with the horse, while we sit and keep guard by the *débris*.

Happy Thought.—Lucky my Aunt wasn't with us.

Cazell says, "I tell you what you ought to have done."

"What?" I ask, patiently.

"You ought to have tried him in a gig with high wheels, so that he could have kicked as much as he liked. You oughtn't to have tried him in that little light-trap of yours."

No. I feel *that, now*.

One thing is certain, viz., This horse does *not* go in harness; or rather he does "go" in harness. If I were *selling* him, I think I should advertise him as a "horse,

first-rate for harness on the level, and an A, 1, goer *up*-hill," —I should leave the purchaser to find out how to get *down*-hill again.

* * * * * *

Entry in Diary.—Clever cob sold to a farmer. He only wanted him for riding, and perhaps sometimes to put him in a heavy cart. I said, "He's never been in a cart, but I dare say he'd do *that* work well enough. He'd been in harness," I added, in an offhand manner, "before he came to me." From which I left the farmer to infer that if he'd been in harness before he came to me, so he had been in harness while he was with me; and, if so, that he'd go in harness for ever afterwards.

Happy Thought (*Hamlet on horse-dealing*).—"That one can smile and smile, and be a villain."

THE STORY OF MY LEGAL EXAMINATION,

AND

MY AUNT'S GREAT POLICE CASE.

THE STORY OF MY LEGAL EXAMINATION.

MY Aunt paid a Conveyancer a hundred pounds to teach me all he knew, or, at all events, so much of his knowledge as he could spare, without inconvenience to himself.

The implicit confidence reposed in me, subsequently, by my Aunt, seems to render a sort of Apologia necessary, in order to "show cause" *why* my legal knowledge was never of any great service either to her or myself.

On reviewing the commencement of my career, I find that we were all three mistaken in our views of the future. By all three, I mean, my Aunt, my Uncle (her brother), and their Nephew, myself. One mistake I made at a very early period, namely, at Camford, where I astonished my uncle by being unable to point out my name to him in the Honour List of the Little-Go examination. However, I proved to him, that it was only owing to my having taken up a line of study totally different from that expected by the Examiners, that I had been, to speak technically, "plucked."

I had disdained to attempt the ordinary line, and, there-

fore, I neither came out with honours, nor without them. In short, I didn't come out at all, except out of the Senate House before the examination had concluded.

After this mistake, I thought that the best thing I could do, to prevent a recurrence of that accident, was to go away and read. I chose Brown of Corpus for my tutor, or "coach," as the word is, and of course discovered afterwards that I ought to have gone to Smith of Sidney. I had a narrow squeak of it with Brown, who had invented a favourite formula for polishing off the most difficult equations. It was apparently so easy that I left it to the last, and then found that any attempt at *memoria technica* was utterly unsuited to my peculiar faculties.

When the time for my degree came, I went in for mathematical honours, and came out in the "*Pol.*" However, I was able to write B.A. at the end of my name, which I dare say I *have* done once or twice since, to see how it looked, but without any definite object.

The last examination I found myself obliged to undergo was for the law. It had been determined by my uncle and a couple of aunts, that as two of my cousins were in the army, another in the navy (always going to join his ship, and perpetually being somewhere else on leave, as far as I could make out), a fourth in the City at Lloyd's (where he is always ready for luncheon with a friend) and a fifth in Liverpool, where he is making a colossal fortune out of something which requires him to be for the greater part of his time at his London club—it was decided, I say, by them, that I should become a banker.

[I made a mistake in mentioning my law examination first; there's the banking to come.]

The question was put to me, would I like to go into Buller, Fobbes and Grumbury's Bank? I said I thought I should: my notion of my employment at Buller, Fobbes and Grumbury's being that I should stand behind a counter with a copper coal shovel, and dabble in sovereigns. Everyone said that I was a lucky fellow, and would be a partner with Buller, Fobbes and Grumbury, or, Buller deceased and only Fobbes and Grumbury left, I should succeed to Grumbury's vacant place, or Grumbury being gone, I should come into Fobbes' place, or both defunct, I should be all alone as Myself, late Buller, Fobbes and Grumbury. There was the opening, said my uncle, encouraging me as if I were a ferret going in to work my way up, and hunt out poor old Fobbes and Grumbury.

In I went. The partners were very particular about their clerks being at the office at nine, and not leaving until the last figure had been scored, and all work done, which often didn't happen till half-past five. At midday I would rush over to my cousin at Lloyd's, who could always spare an hour to my five minutes, and ask him to give me luncheon. I have come to the conclusion that turtle-soup and punch is not the best thing to take in the middle of the day, if you want to add up accounts. Birch's punch is A 1, and soon became A 2, and A 3. I believe my cousin went back ready to write risks for fabulous sums to the coast of the undiscovered islands, if anyone had suggested such speculations then. For myself, after one of these midday repasts, I

nodded to Buller, smiled on Fobbes through the glass door, and winked at Grumbury when he came out to know whose eye it was: and on my tenth day in the bank I went wrong to the extent of thirty-thousand pounds in my account. I forget now how it was that I had to enter it, or what took me into the cashier's department: probably Birch's punch did it. At all events the cashier's clerks, with Fobbes and Grumbury into the bargain, were all kept at the bank long after office hours, utterly unable to make out where the money was lost, and I have a sort of notion that in consequence of this little error of mine, something "went up" that ought to have gone down, and something "went down," that ought to have gone up, and the Stock Exchange was, somehow, visibly affected.

I was cautioned, and went on for more than a week at this sort of drudgery (for drudgery it was to a B.A.), when my cousin at Lloyd's suddenly discovered a wonderful beverage concocted by the head waiter of the Marine Insurance establishment. There was plenty of ice in it, I know that, and you sucked it through a straw, like sherry cobler: it wasn't sherry cobler, and it wasn't any other cobbler; but it was one of those drinks that you go on sipping and wondering what it is, and how it's made, and whether half-a-glass more would hurt you, and finally decide that there isn't a headache in half a hogshead of it. I did all this, without arriving at the half hogshead point, and the half-glass more *did* hurt me. I have been since informed that I offered to fight one of the customers, who, I pointed out, had insulted me, across the counter, and whose proffered cheque I scorned.

Fobbes and Grumbury agreed to look over this (Grumbury was somewhat obstinate, in Buller's absence from town), and I remained in the bank; but I avoided luncheons. My evenings in town were given up to relaxation, and my mornings I, with difficulty, devoted to Buller, Fobbes and Grumbury. In fact, I may say, that, after a time, finding refreshing sleep at night incompatible with going to bed late and getting to Grumbury's at nine A.M., I devoted my evenings to the serious work of amusement, and the day time to refreshing myself with as much sleep as I could get at my desk behind the counter at Fobbes and Grumbury's.

Summer and cricket came; once I stayed away with leave and missed the train: another time I stayed away without leave, and missed two trains. Buller frowned, Fobbes shook his head, and Grumbury observed, "It wouldn't do." Fobbes told me that "when *he* was a young man, he came into the City with a crust, and had to work for his daily bread. *He* had no cricket or amusements." I didn't know if this was meant for an argument; if it was, I had nothing to say. I pitied poor Fobbes. Grumbury chimed in that "*he* had been *made* to work; had not known what it was to have a holiday for years," which (I am sorry to say it of Grumbury), was not the strict truth, as he never came to the bank on Saturdays and had stopped away on Mondays and Wednesdays (having a country farm) for the last twenty years. Buller only sighed. But all three partners thought I had made a mistake in coming into the bank, and so I retired, leaving the victory in the hands of Buller, Fobbes and Grumbury.

"Now," said my uncle, who was very angry at the partnership prospect being obliterated: "You *must* do something."

We were at dessert at the time, and being thus addressed, I began peeling an apple: not because I wanted it, but to convey an idea that I had no wish to be idle.

"The Army?" said I, inquiringly.

"You're too old," was my uncle's reply; surlily.

I murmured vaguely, "the Mounted Rifles," having some indistinct notion that you could enter this corps (if such an one existed, of which I had my secret doubts) up to any age: perhaps be a raw recruit at seventy.

"Mounted Fiddlesticks!" said my uncle, who thought I was treating the subject with levity, and did not want me to be, as he expressed it, "kicking my heels about at home."

I couldn't help laughing at his saying "Mounted Fiddlesticks," whereupon he begged me not to play the fool at *his* table, whatever I might do at Fobbes and Grumbury's. From which you may gather that my uncle did not possess the best of tempers: he was also, as you may have seen from his view of the future partnership at Fobbes's, a very sanguine man.

"The Law?" I suggested experimentally.

"Yes," said he superciliously, "that's all very well: but what do you mean by the Law?"

I did not know *what* I meant, having indeed spoken at haphazard: but I had a general idea of a long wig, bands, a gown, and being a judge, somehow. I was silent.

"The Bar," asked my uncle, "or a solicitor?"

Never having considered this before, I thought the dutiful course would be to refer it to him. He chose the Bar. The

prospect he held out was a brilliant one. "Make a speech," said he, rising with the occasion, for he was of a sanguine temperament. "Everyone says 'clever, very clever: who is he?' Then they all want to know you. Some question arises, of importance; you make another speech. Judges immediately point you out as the rising man: then you get into the House, make a hit there, your fortune's made, and you're Lord Chancellor—the highest dignity in the kingdom."

As he had evidently made up his mind as to my future position, I could only try to see it in the same light, and reply, "Yes," though I felt that unless there should be a great change in the British Constitution, some considerable time might elapse before he would see *me* on the woolsack. This, however, I kept to myself, and admitted to my uncle that my elevation to the chancellorship was not such a *very* improbable thing after all. He then began to tell me stories of chancellors who had begun life by sweeping out offices, or as errand-boys, or by holding horses, until I secretly regretted not having chosen the sweeping profession as the true road to legal preferment.

Being upon the subject, he pointed to the example of Lord Chancellor Somebody, who was at the bar for ten years without getting a brief, and was one day about to throw up the profession in disgust, and enlist, when a brief came, he spoke splendidly, and his fortune was made. I realised myself in that portion of the history where he hadn't any business; but this I kept to myself.

It was decided that I should go to the bar. The entrance being obtained by either passing an examination, or attend-

ing a course of lectures, I chose the latter, having lost confidence in myself from experience in the former method. I had nearly completed the appointed number, when I made a mistake in the day. This I explained to the lecturer, and it was overlooked. But in the following week for the first time I mistook the hour, and arrived when the door was shut, the last lecture given, and the Professor gone into the country for his vacation.

A friend said "Oh, go in for the Exam. Easy as possible."

I suggested that there were legal difficulties which would pose me. His answer was confidently, "Not a bit. All law is founded upon the principles of common sense. Reduce any apparent legal difficulty to first principles, and there you are." (I subsequently tried this; and certainly there I was, but didn't get any further.) "But technical terms one must get up," I objected. He was quite indignant.

"Technical terms," he replied, "can be mastered in a week's reading."

His theory was that hardly any lawyers know anything of law: that the men who get on best know the least; which is, to the beginner, encouraging as a theory, but fails when reduced to practice, or, more strictly speaking, when you, as a barrister, are reduced to *no* practice. However, what man dared I dared, and in I went. I read my paper through carefully: it didn't seem to contain much law that I was acquainted with; but remembering my friend's advice about "first principles" and "common sense," I settled down to one question. It was this:—

"Why is notice of a prior incumbrance, &c., which ought to be, but is not, registered in a County Registry, effectual to observe priority?"

I tried to reduce this to principles of common sense. After much thought, it struck me that perhaps if I *commenced* the answer on paper it would come right of itself somehow. So I began slowly on a large sheet and with a big B up in one corner, "Because——"—yes, exactly, *because why?* It looked like the answer to a riddle. I glanced round at my neighbours; they were all scribbling away at various rates, heads down, well at their work. The examiner had his eye on me, so I made a feint to be thinking deeply, and scratched out "Because," slowly, and then wrote it again, in a different character, on another sheet of paper. After a few minutes I found that I had only been sketching fancy portraits of little examiners with big heads all about the page, with an occasional reminiscence of the lineaments of Buller, Fobbes & Grumbury. This I felt wouldn't pass me, so I made a bold jump to number seven, in consequence of recognising the word "mortgage."

"*No. VII.*—Why is a person taking a mortgage of property and knowing that it was subject to an equitable mortgage, postponed to the latter?"

It was necessary to write something, so I commenced by saying that "By the word mortgage we must understand ——" this I scratched out, and on reconsideration began again thus:—"To enter into this subject as fully as it deserves, we must reduce the technical question to the first principles of common sense." There I stopped. It was no

good. An attempt to hit off an original definition of "Constructive Fraud" was also, I have reason to believe, a failure.

As an example of Constructive Fraud I ventured upon the instance of a builder who had undertaken to erect an habitable and solid house and who had "scamped" his work. I have since ascertained that this is not what the examiners meant by "Constructive Fraud."

A short-pointed question, evidently framed by a brisk examiner, caught my eye. "*No. X.*—What is Replevin?" I did not like to reply on paper that it was made up of the words "*Re*" and "*plevin*," which was the only answer that suggested itself to me after looking at it for five minutes; so I put this on one side, and, like a Mazeppa among the examination questions, Again I urged on my wild career.

Page 3. On the second paper: Criminal Law. "If a prisoner has received judgment, and the sentence be afterwards reversed by a Court of Error, can he be again indicted for the same offence?"

Here I was at home at last. "No," I wrote boldly. "He could not be indicted for the same offence, because,"—now came an opportunity for a specimen of my *style;* the examiners could judge from this what an acquisition I should be to the bar as an advocate,—"because it is the glorious privilege of a native Englishman, of one whose birthright is to call himself free and never to know slavery,"—this was, I felt, a too evident paraphrase on the chorus of "Rule Britannia;" but it looked well, and would succeed admirably if declaimed,—"to be charged only once with

the same offence; and being convicted, or unconvicted, it mattered not, he could never, never,"—"Rule Britannia" again: I ought to have given my attention to maritime law—"be again placed at the bar before twelve of his fellow-countrymen, ready to take his stand for the offence once committed, and"—here I felt I was getting weak, and might lapse into unconscious verbiage, so pulled up with—"in fact it was totally against the principles of English law, and English common sense, on which *all* law was founded,"—this came in well,—"to try a man twice for only one offence." After this effort I paused. What was the next question? The next was a pendant to the former, and ran thus:—

"*Give the reason for your answer.*"

This took me aback. It involved reading my answer over again. I could see no reason for it. The more I thought of it the less reason I could see. In fact the whole case came gradually to assume a totally different complexion. Why shouldn't a man be tried twice if he deserved it, or could be caught again? "Caught again!" That suggested a new train of thought. Perhaps the question turned upon this supposition. Yet, if so, it was absurdly like the receipt attributed to Glasse in her cookery book, of "First catch your hare," and I couldn't very well write *that* down, as it might look like impertinence towards the examiner or benchers, or whoever they were who had to read these papers. "*Give the reason for your answer.*" No, I could not see any. There was no reason for it, except that I "didn't know any other." I'd leave it, and pretend I hadn't seen it.

Here was a simple one, almost pretty in its simplicity, "What constitutes the crime of larceny?"

"Taking a pocket-handkerchief," was the first answer that arose to my lips. But why only a pocket-handkerchief? That wouldn't do. "To take *anything*." That sounded like an invitation to luncheon—Would I take anything? 'Pon my word, I say to myself, one ought to know what larceny is. It was mere quibbling to say it was theft. No. The *vivâ voce* portion commenced.

"Could I," I was asked, "state some cases in which an indictment would lie for words spoken?"

Could I? No, I couldn't, but I would try. "An indictment would lie," I began, sticking closely to the form of the question, "for words spoken when"—here I considered. The examiner waited. *He* didn't suggest anything, so I began again—"words spoken,—that is,—in words spoken, an indictment would lie"—a sudden inspiration. I had mistaken the sense of the word *lie*. I had it, and finished brilliantly, "An indictment, in fact, would *lie*, if it said, for instance, that such and such words"—I lengthened it out on purpose to give a legal tone to my explanation—"said to have been spoken had *not* been spoken." The examiner looked up and asked me if I had understood his question. On my replying perfectly, he thanked me, and told me I might go. He had had enough of me. But I was beginning to take rather a fancy to him. I should have liked to have engaged him in general conversation. We should have understood one another then. He made a note of my name, and it was intimated to me the next morning that

further attendance on my part in Lincoln's Inn Hall would, for the present, be dispensed with.

I subsequently ascertained that, in addition to giving this inspired answer, I had sent up my papers with my only answer mixed by mistake with two sheets full of grotesque examiners, admirably drawn by me with large heads and little legs. This was my mistake at Lincoln's Inn. Subsequently I completed my attendance on the lectures and at the dinners, was called to the bar, sat down by mistake (on that occasion) next to one of the judges of the land at the benchers' table, and was politely removed by the butler.

After this I went to a conveyancer's. . . . with what advantage to myself and my Aunt will be shown in the following History of

MY AUNT'S GREAT POLICE CASE.

MY AUNT'S GREAT POLICE CASE.

CHAPTER I.

HER LEGACY—ITS DUTIES—COMPLICATIONS—MY LEGAL TRAINING — THE CONVEYANCER'S CHAMBERS — MY AUNT'S HUNDRED—HER RECENT IMPROVEMENT—A VISIT—A CONSULTATION—PUTTING UP—RESULT—THE CABMAN—DIFFICULTIES—RESCUE—NIGHT AND MORNING—AN INTERVAL—SECOND APPEARANCE OF MY AUNT—STARTLING INTELLIGENCE.

Y Aunt had something left her by Somebody. She was under the impression that she had only to mention the fact to another Somebody somewhere in the City, and she would get it.

On making the application to this Somebody in the City, who turned out to be a Company, and Limited, she was informed that she couldn't get her money for at least three months. Whereupon she sent to her banker, and informed

him that she couldn't have the money for three months. At the end of three months she wrote to the banker, who wrote to the Company Limited, and the Company Limited, in the politest manner possible, wrote to *him*, and asked for the necessary papers.

Then the banker referred the question to my Aunt. "Goodness!" said my Aunt, who began to see difficulties, "Do they take me for a swindler?"

It then struck her that the Limited was pretending to forget her claim; so she found the papers. Having sent these to her banker, and her banker having forwarded them to the Company Limited, the politest possible message was returned, to the effect, that, though the papers were perfectly satisfactory *as far as they went* ("Do they think I'm a forger?" exclaimed my Aunt indignantly), yet it was *absolutely necessary* that she should take out Letters of Administration.

"Now, what Letters of Administration are, or how you take them out, or where you take them out to, I know no more," said my Aunt, helplessly, "than the Man in the Moon."

Hitherto my Aunt had always received her dividends regularly, had not entered into investments, nor into speculations, and had never been an Administratrix. Being suddenly placed in this position, the ordinary calm of her life seemed to have vanished.

On receiving this fresh advice from the City concerning the Letters of Administration, she thought over the matter all the morning, made nothing of it, came to a decision, and

telling her maid (she now lives in lodgings with Doddridge) to get a cab, she drove down to see me.

I am her resort in difficulties. She is under the impression that, because I happen to have been called to the Bar, and to have "read" in a Conveyancer's chambers, I must be thoroughly acquainted with the Law, and, as a relation, will give her good sound advice, thus obviating a consultation with a solicitor, which she associates, indistinctly and generally, with the Police Courts, Old Bailey, and witness boxes.

"I don't want to have anything to do with Law, my dear," my Aunt says to me. "But I don't mind coming to *you*," which, seeing that I am a barrister, is scarcely complimentary to my legal knowledge. Perhaps she little knows,—in fact I am sure she little knows what a very small amount of Law I managed to bring away from the Temple Lecture rooms and Lincoln's Inn Hall, in exchange for regular payments for dinners (which, after the first few indispensable ones, I never ate), attendance on Lecturers (where I made some very pleasant acquaintances, and got through a deal of light literature), a wig, a gown (sold afterwards, at a loss, to a friend), some law books, enormous precedent books (which subsequently became account-books, scrap-books, odds-and-ends books), and a hundred pounds to a Conveyancing Barrister for the privilege of having a place to sit in, when I visited Lincoln's Inn, in the company of four pleasant young gentlemen of more or less studious habits, but with very clear ideas on the subject of luncheon at one o'clock daily.

If that Conveyancer had ever called me into his room, and in a fit of remorse had said, "You paid a hundred pounds to

learn something; you have learnt nothing. Here is your hundred pounds," I should have looked upon him as a man doing nothing more than his duty. By what legal quibble he ever justified himself, to himself, for keeping my money is a puzzle to me. But I suppose he went by precedent, that being his rule in all possible cases.

So my Aunt (who, by the way, is the real sufferer in this case, as it was *her* hundred pounds) comes to me on every occasion when she requires legal advice, taking this as a sort of interest for her money invested. She has lately become less nervous than when we were together at Ramsgate, and her tears no longer flow upon the slightest provocation. She is in appearance less of the Lady Abbess than formerly, and exhibits, except in this particular instance, more self-reliance. From which I gather that something has happened; but as to what that something is, I am profoundly ignorant. It can't be (at least I should imagine it impossible) that she has been on the verge of bankruptcy, and that this Legacy has saved her. One of these days, perhaps, she will admit me to her confidence.

She drives down in a Hansom cab ("Four-wheelers and Fevers begin with F," she says—from which it may be inferred that my Aunt has become quite sprightly) to my retired cottage, about ten miles out of town, and the driver "puts up" during the consultation.

The consultation lasts for four hours, including the dinner hour, and the result is that "she must consult a solicitor."

The consultation (with me) consists of her showing me the banker's letters, the Company's replies, her letters, then her

written suspicions of the Company, then explanations as to her fear that the banker wasn't taking much trouble about the matter, then of her anxiety lest some other claimant, some other Administrator, might step in (this was her great dread), and claim the whole sum, whatever it was. "In which case," she continues, "you know there would be law proceedings; and," she adds, with some amount of family pride, and with a view to the interest on the aforesaid Conveyancer's hundred pounds, "*you* could appear for me." We then get out a Law Dictionary (date 1720), and she is much impressed by an article headed "Administrators," extracts from which she takes to be the part of the results of my vast legal erudition, and consequently as so much interest on her capital to which she is entitled.

The consultation being finished, the cab is sent for.

The process of "putting up" for several hours has had a considerable effect on the driver, who, on being asked if he recollects the address he had driven from in the afternoon (it is now past ten at night), replies, hazily, "Rightchar," meaning, it is supposed, "Right you are;" adding an exhortation to my Aunt to "Step up, will yer?"

"That man is drunk," I say, judicially, to the servant. The servant is uncertain. A friend stopping with me agrees with me, but is inclined to give him a chance. My Aunt doesn't believe in his inebriety, but proposes some theory about the night-air and the uncertain light. The man himself denies the imputation warmly.

Not wishing for a row (which means, in a general way, "having my head punched") I assist my Aunt into the cab.

We wish her good-bye, but wait to see the start.

This is difficult, owing to the driver being unsettled in his mind as to where the road lies. First he pulls the reins so as to back the cab against the palings; then (still explaining to us from his perch that he was only "trying to take the best turning") he pulls the horse round with the right rein, which, resulting in no progress at all, he changes for the left.

Upon this, we beseech my Aunt to get out, the man being, unquestionably, drunk.

The driver, hearing this, vehemently contradicts us, and attempts to explain that the horse couldn't go on straight because the reins were twisted.

"Untwist them then, you idiot," says my friend. I wish at the moment he wouldn't call the man names, or if he does that he wouldn't stand safely inside our gate and do it, where the man couldn't see him, and would think the voice came from me. The driver, however, doesn't notice this; but descends from his seat (a dangerous and perfectly unnecessary operation), in order to adopt my friend's advice and untwist the reins.

All he does is to tug at the horse's head and swear a little, which probably relieves his brain considerably, as he is able to climb up again, after not more than three false slips. Again on his box, his pulling at the unfortunate animal's head becomes more violent, when, seeing him about to back into the ditch, we rush towards the cab and receive my Aunt in our arms, anyhow, like a parcel out of a van at a luggage office.

Then we shut the gate on the man, and leave him. He rings the bell at intervals for an hour afterwards; but, attracting no attention, he, it is supposed, drives off. How far he got, or if he ever reached London at all that night, is to this day a matter of great uncertainty. My Aunt has the spare room, and next morning goes to her solicitor.

* * * * *

Some days afterwards she comes down again, this time in a fly.

"Letters of Administration?" I ask.

"No, my dear!" she cries, in an almost fainting state. "*I'm summoned!*"

"Summoned!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," she replies, "to a Police Court. *That Cabman!* To-morrow I shall be a prisoner. Tell me what they can do to me."

CHAPTER II.

PROSECUTOR — PRISONER — DEFENDANT — QUESTIONS OF CRIMINAL LAW — COMFORT — A POSER — CHANGE OF CHARACTER — STRANGE — MISS SOMEBODY — CASE FOR THE CHANCELLOR — OR JURY — QUESTION OF COSTUME — THE MARTYR — TOUCHING FAREWELL — À DEMAIN.

TOLD her that being "summoned" only meant that she was to attend at a police-court.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed my Aunt; "and be in the papers next day, with only my Christian name, and nothing before it! Besides," she added, as if seeing it in a totally new light, "one doesn't know what sort of account they'll give of it."

I informed her that there were twenty or thirty ordinary summons cases occuring every day which were never reported.

I don't think she liked this mode of summarily dismissing a matter of all-absorbing interest.

"Which am I," she asked, "the Prosecutor or the—the—what is it?—Prisoner?"

"No, not exactly Prisoner," I said. "She was," I explained, putting it as palatably as possible, "the Defendant."

This seemed to alter her opinion of the importance of the

summons, as her next question was, "I suppose I must attend at the Court?"

It appeared that she had some idea of being represented by her maid. This, I informed her, was impossible.

"Perhaps, then, I'd better have a Barrister." I foresaw that she had in view, as usual, the interest for her hundred pounds paid to my legal tutor, the Conveyancer, and was firmly determined to resist any such proposal as that of *my going* into Court on her account.

"Barristers, my dear Aunt, are not required in such a case as this."

"But," she argues, evidently considering my information as merely given evasively, and for a selfish consideration, "but some nice points of law might arise, you know; and then if I wasn't prepared, you know, the Cabman might win, merely on a quibble. Such things *do* happen," she added seriously, seeing me smile. "I'm sure you read of them every day in the papers, and goodness knows I don't want to argue the case myself, and perhaps be carried up to higher Courts, and go over it all again before a Lord Chancellor, merely for the sake of thirty shillings, for that's what he claims."

I assured her that her fears were perfectly groundless.

"Indeed!" she returned, triumphantly. "Then why do we read of Mr. Somebody, the Magistrate, reserving a point, and sending it up to a higher Court?"

I began an explanation of "why the Magistrate"—but, failing to make it intelligible, in consequence, I admit, of not myself distinctly knowing why he did anything of the sort,

I fell back upon my old position, that this was one of those cases in which no point of law was likely to be raised.

My Aunt could not see this. This police case had given a new impetus to her placid existence; she had no time for tears, or hysterics, and, indeed, appeared to be so bitten with a sort of Law fever, that, had there been a chance offered her, she would, I believe, have then and there gone down to the first Police-Court, and requested to be heard, *ex parte*, on the merits of her own personal and private view of the case.

"Ladies *do* conduct their own cases," she observed, with dignity; "because I know there's a Miss Somebody who's always coming up, over and over again, and speaking for years in the House of Lords; but I think," my Aunt added more to herself than to me, "that at the end of every four days she's generally put out of Court by the Usher."

This reminiscence came opportunely, as my Aunt had no fancy for figuring in such a scene as being "put out of Court" represented to *her* mind. Struggling with the Usher, and hitting him over the head with a blue bag, full of legal papers and red tape, was the least that could be done (so she evidently thought) in defence of her right, in the event of such an "ungentlemanly order being made by the Lord Chancellor."

"It will take place," she informed me, alluding to her case at the Police-Court, "to-morrow: and I'm to be there about twelve. Talking of 'twelve,' I suppose," she said, as if rather proud of her legal knowledge, "that I shall be able to object to the jury if I don't like them?"

Once more she was disappointed at hearing from me that

at a Police-Court there was no jury. She had always thought that *all* trials were by jury. After a silence, during which she was considering this extraordinary defect in the British Constitution, she startled me by exclaiming, suddenly,—

"And no wigs?"

My shaking my head depressed her immensely: it brought home to her the fact of "no wigs" in the liveliest manner. She was getting more and more astonished at every revelation concerning the administration of justice.

"But,"—she asked, in a tone of remonstrance, as much as to say, "Come, this won't do, you know; I can't really believe you if you deny this"—"surely the Magistrate wears a wig?"

I really wished he did, for her sake. She looked so utterly aghast on my replying, "No, Aunt, he doesn't. No one wears a wig."

"*No* one?"

"No one."

"It's very extraordinary," she observed, in a musing tone, after a pause; "I always till now thought they wore wigs, I fancy I've seen pictures of them in wigs."

Not finding me in a humour to question this effort of her imagination, she looked at her watch, and reminding me that I had to come and fetch her *punctually* at eleven ("so as to be in time, for one may have to push through a tremendous crush, and Doddridge is no sort of use in a crowd," she said), she walked down the garden, with the step of an early martyr going to the stake in the cause of Truth; and shaking my hand solemnly (still in the same sort of character as some

historical personage bidding some other historical personage farewell the night before the execution) she entered her fly (driver quite sober this time), and drove off, viewing herself as Marie Antoinette taken to her doom, in a tumbril, at the instance of a Revolutionary Cabman.

CHAPTER III.

TO-MORROW ARRIVES — THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE — THE CROWD— FEARS— INQUIRIES— OFFICIALS — UNFORTUNATE SIMILE — A PROSPECT — THE OFFICE — THE CLERKS — THE INSPECTOR — MORE OFFICIALS — INFORMATION — UNCERTAINTY — THE POLICE COURT— INTERIOR—SEATS—THE RUM LADY—CONFIDENCES— INTERESTING CASE—OLD PURKISS—THE ARRIVAL.

LEVEN O'CLOCK. We drive up to the Police-Court, and get as near as we can to it; that is, the cab stops at the entrance of an alley, and, down the alley, among a number of squalid dwellings and opposite a flaring public-house, is the Police-Court.

"It's a shame," exclaims my Aunt, "that they don't build finer places for Police-Courts!"

She would have had a Palace of Justice specially erected for this occasion.

We come upon a crowd of unwashed people herding about the entrance: women who have been having their eyes blacked with a few strong touches, a little blue being artistically thrown in, and dissipated, unshaven ruffians lounging against the walls, with the air of *habitués*, as no doubt they

are. A sort of dirty parody on fops' alley on an opera night.

We struggle into the passage.

"I wonder if my Cabman's here?" my Aunt says. We have, both, a sort of feeling that he may dart out upon us vindictively, from somewhere, and that the police will side with him.

"Where's the Court?" says my Aunt to me. She is very nervous about being on the spot at the exact time, because she has heard that a summoned person, not appearing, is immediately committed for contempt of Court.

"Is this," I ask, addressing a Policeman, who, I suppose, hears me, though he doesn't show any signs of doing so, "Is this the way to the Court?"

The official, without altering his position (he is leaning against, and, as it were, across the door, so as to make a slanting barrier of himself, and perhaps is suspicious of treachery on my Aunt's or my part) replies "Yes."

I inform my Aunt that this *is* the way into the Court. She wishes me to inquire if the Magistrate is in.

I think over this for a minute, and consider how to put the question pleasantly, and yet so as not to induce the Policeman to think I'm laughing at him. I propose (to myself) to put it thus: "Is the Magistrate in?" but that looks as if we were merely making a morning call, and is, on the whole too familiar. The same objection applies to "Is the Magistrate at home?" I begin, "Is the Magistrate——" and am going to say "sitting?" but it occurs to me that this treats the Magistrate like a hen.

The Policeman helps me out. Without yielding an inch of his vantage ground, so as to be prepared against any attempt at a surprise on the part of my Aunt or myself, he says, austerely, "He ain't come yet."

"O, indeed! When will he come?"

"Don't know."

The oracle shuts his mouth, and is silent.

"And we shall have to wait ever so long." This my Aunt whispers to me, nervously indignant, "Among these people! Good gracious! I'm sure we shall catch something horrid!"

I fear at this minute that there will be a return of her Ramsgate hysterical state. I feel too that the atmosphere and the excitement are beginning to tell upon *me*. If this case should be adjourned, and then indefinitely prolonged (I don't see how it could be, but once in a law case one never knows the result), I foresee a return of all my old symptoms, and the necessity of taking myself to some medicinal course in order to restore "My Health."

A door is open on our left, and within I see a desk, two Clerks, and a Police-sergeant, or some official higher than an ordinary Policeman, engaged in looking over a large ledger.

As an ingenious way of getting out of the crowd, I suggest our stepping into this office.

"Tell them you're a Barrister," my Aunt whispers. I don't see what good this would do; and if I did tell them, in a place like a Police-Court where everybody is suspected and suspicious, how am I to prove it?

We step in. Nobody takes any notice of us, so I propose taking notice of somebody, just to account for our being there.

I address the man, who looks like a clerk, affably, wondering what office he holds, and whether he is a Clerk or not. My Aunt impresses me strongly with the necessity of being civil—very civil—to these officials, as she whispers (she does nothing but whisper mysteriously in my ear), this may be of use to us, and perhaps (this is her leading idea), this young man may be the Magistrate's nephew. (It turns out afterwards that she once knew a Judge who made his nephew the Clerk of Arraigns, and she considers it the usual thing.) I say "good-morning" to the Clerk. I feel instinctively that my Aunt behind me is smiling on him, and I despise myself, and her, for fawning upon creatures in power: but I do it.

The Clerk nods.

"I suppose we may step in here till the Magistrate comes?" I inquire, still pleasantly. Fawning, both of us.

"Yes," answers the Clerk, carelessly.

"Thank you, Sir," says my Aunt gratefully.

I am not sorry for this, as if the Cabman is outside in the passage, he may be attended by his sympathising friends, and the meeting might be unpleasant. We remain in the office, and we converse about nothing particular in whispers, until I begin to foresee a difficulty in regaining our natural tones.

A stout man buttoned up to the chin (an inspector probably), walks in.

"Tomkins and Barker down?" asks the last-comer of the Sergeant.

"Same as before," answers the latter, writing on a bit of paper, and handing it across to the Clerk, who inspects it, and observes that "It's all right."

Then the Inspector looks at the Clerk, and remarks that "Time's getting on;" then the Sergeant closes his ledger, locks it up, and putting a bunch of keys in his pocket, also remarks that "It *is* getting late;" wherepon the Clerk, shutting up his book, and coming out from behind his enclosure, caps the other two observations by saying forcibly that "It will be later afore we've done;" at which witticism we, in our character of sycophants, feel bound to smile, and do so accordingly.

The ice being thus broken, I ask, on behalf of my Aunt, when our case will come on; at least, I explain (so as not to lead to future complications), "Not *my* case, but this lady's, my Aunt's;" this I add as if the Clerk had been my bosom friend for years, and I were introducing my relative to him.

"Name?" says he. I give the name. "It's down for No. two on the list."

"It'll be taken after the night cases."

"When," ventures my Aunt, timidly, "do you think it will be heard?"

"Ah! can't say," returns the Clerk. "You see a message has just come down about Mr. Wigginthorpe's having met with an accident, and so Mr. Sharply will run up from t'other Court, when he's heard the cases down there."

"Good gracious!" exclaims my Aunt, "then if there

are many cases at the other Court, mine mayn't be heard for hours."

"P'raps not," replies the Clerk, carelessly, and turns to speak to a friend who has dropped in to have a chat by the fire.

The Inspector corroborates the Clerk's statement. Mr. Sharply will be quick enough when he *does* come, but that may be in a quarter of an hour, or that very minute, or not for two hours yet.

The glorious uncertainty of the Law is on this occasion represented by Mr. Sharply.

"Perhaps," my Aunt thinks, "the Cabman will get tired of waiting, and then won't appear, after all."

This idea of tiring out the Cabman is a congenial one to my Aunt's mind, and if we could only have some luncheon, the morning would not hang so heavily on our hands, as, at present, it most certainly does.

We are becoming quite accustomed to the Police-Office, and almost attached to its fire, when the Sergeant intimates, *sotto voce*, that if we like to sit down inside the Court until the Magistrate comes, he can let us in.

He puts this as a favour, in the same sort of confidential manner that a Railway Guard offers to keep a carriage for you for "the through journey." I discover, subsequently, that we could have walked in without this permission.

I put my hand in my waistcoat pocket, hinting at a shilling (which I subsequently give him, and feel I am suborning a probable witness), and we are passed in, the official, forming the slanting barrier afore-mentioned, with-

drawing himself to let us pass. I fancy the Sergeant and that official will share my shilling.

In Court. Small room. Dirty representatives of the general public behind a wooden railing. In front of them the dock. In the centre, at a table covered with green baize, are seated elderly respectable gentlemen, looking as if they'd all had their black waistcoats cut out of the same piece of satin. They have papers before them, and are (we hit upon it at once) the Solicitors. On their left is a something between a pew and a school-desk. One man sits there. "A reporter," I suggest, and he becomes immediately an object of intense interest to my Aunt. On the right is a Policeman in a private box, reading a newspaper. At the other end of the room is a raised stage, as if for a performance. It is fitted with a table-desk, a chair, and a screen to conceal a door in the wall. Quite gives one the idea of an entertainment. Magistrate suddenly to appear from behind screen, taking every one by surprise, and then going through a round of favourite characters, changing his dress and wigs under his table, and popping up as somebody else. Solicitors in front to represent stalls, or orchestra.

Clerk sits just below and in front of the table-desk. He is placed sideways, and appears to be peculiarly uncomfortable, having evidently insufficient room for his legs, which, if stretched, would, as it were, stand out by themselves, and spoil the picture.

"Where are we to go?" my Aunt asks, nervously.

As we can't join the public behind the rail, and will be certainly out of place with the Policeman in his private

box (only licensed to hold one), I choose the pew where the Reporter is.

We seat ourselves, and listen to the Solicitors, who are laughing and chatting loudly, chiefly (it appears from the conversation, which is almost unintelligible to us) on professional matters.

A lady, smelling strongly of rum, joins us in the pew. She is much interested in what we may be here for.

"Is it an assault case?" she asks my Aunt.

"O dear no," replies my Aunt; "it's only a summons."

She says this as if there was nothing out of the way in her being here for such an ordinary affair.

"Summons for assault," persists the Rum Lady, eyeing my Aunt as if contrasting her muscular power with her own.

I come to her relief. I explain, "A summons for a cab-fare."

"O!" says the Rum Lady, her interest evidently considerably diminished; adding proudly, "Mine's assault."

We both say "Indeed!" and my Aunt edges away from her towards the Reporter. The Rum Lady, being once started, proceeds to inform us that her landlady (whom she points out in the crowd behind the rail—a villainous-looking one-eyed hag) had accused her of stealing the counterpane and sheets.

"But you didn't?" I say, compassionately.

"Didn't!" she exclaims, in an energetic under-tone. "I soon showed her I didn't." She is a big powerful woman, and, *with* rum, a decidedly awkward customer. I apologise;

"I mean," I explain, "that she is here wrongfully accused." Upon this she winks slowly at me first, and then nudges my Aunt to enjoy the joke. This freemasonry being finished, she assumes an air of great caution, and whispers to us to take care, as Old Purkiss is looking, adding, "I 'ate that Purkiss."

We ascertain that Purkiss, the object of her detestation, is one of the respectable-looking elderly gentlemen at the table. "He's often been against me, he has," she continues, always in a whisper, and avoiding the eye of old Purkiss, who is, it seems, on this memorable occasion also, engaged by the opposite side.

An hour passes in this lively manner. I think we all take to watching Old Purkiss; if we flag at all in this interesting occupation, the Rum Lady nudges me, and nodding towards him, whispers, "That Purkiss!" fiercely. "Well," says my Aunt, who is beginning to feel faint, "I'd sooner have paid the man twice over than have gone through this." The clock strikes two; there is a slight stir among the Solicitors and their papers. The Policeman folds up his newspaper, and evidently means business. Two other Policemen come in, the Clerk sits upright in his chair and poises a pen. In another second there is a bang and a slam, the screen shakes, and a little gentleman bounds from behind it (quite in keeping with my first idea of an entertainment), and brings himself up with a jerk behind the desk-table, on which he places both hands.

The Reporter informs us, in an undertone, that this is Mr. Sharply, the Magistrate.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAGISTRATE—HIS ADDRESS—FIRST SOLICITOR—AN IMPORTANT CASE—THE WAVERER—AN ASSAULT CASE—A WANDERING WITNESS—NEXT CASE—MAN WITH THE BAG—AN APPLICATION—PERSISTANCE—IMPATIENCE—TIME—LUCID STORY—REMOVAL—NEXT CASE—THE VAGRANT—A DECISION—NEXT CASE—ON WE GO AGAIN.

R. SHARPLY I notice has a quick eye and a surprised head of hair, which gives one the idea of his having been interrupted in the process of being brushed by machinery.

He has a brisk, crisp manner, and is evidently inclined to be what people call "short" with everyone present—specially the Clerk and the Solicitors.

He stands up with the air of a man who is not to be badgered or put down, and places his hands on the table-desk in such a springy and elastic way as to suggest, that, on the slightest provocation, he will vault over, dash in among the papers and inkstands on the Solicitors' table, "scatter his enemies, and make them fall."

Everybody's breath is quite taken away by his sudden and unexpected appearance. We are all, so to speak, staggered.

While animation, as it were, is being restored, Mr. Sharply observes, rapidly, "Gentlemen, I regret the accident that brings me here—I have a great deal of business in the other Court which I haven't got through, and to which I must return—Therefore, I am sure I may rely upon *you*, Gentlemen, to assist in pushing on the business *here* as quickly as possible—Now, what is it?"

This sudden interrogation is addressed to a Solicitor who has risen in front of the Magistrate.

The Solicitor will not, he says, detain the Magistrate one second longer than he can help——

Here Mr. Sharply cuts him short with, "Well, well, what is it? What's the case?"

"The fact is," says the Solicitor, evidently not accustomed to this way of doing business, "the fact is"—here he puts on his spectacles—"that I have an application to make to you, Sir,"—here he produces some papers, and Mr. Sharply, who has been leaning forward on his elbows, as if to give him every attention, now sets himself bolt upright again, as if determined to do nothing of the sort.

The Solicitor continues, "It arises, Sir, out of an ejectment——"

This word sets Mr. Sharply off.

"We really haven't any time for this. It must go to another Court. Call the next case?"

A Wavering Policeman, whose duty it is to call the next case, looks from the Solicitor to the Magistrate, helplessly.

The Solicitor persists. "An assault, Sir, arising out of an

ejectment." The word "assault" catches Mr. Sharply's ear, and, with considerable asperity, he says, "Well, where is he?"

"He?" says the Solicitor, astonished.

"Yes," repeats the Magistrate, "where is he—the complainant? Now, my dear Sir, *do* make haste!"

The Solicitor explains that the complainant is a "she."

"Well," says the irascible Mr. Sharply, in a tone that means anything but "well"—"Where is she? *Do* get on." And here he looks at his watch.

Mrs. Somebody is thereupon called, and comes into the witness-box. She is rather vague, to commence with, on the subject of her name, but having succeeded in making the Clerk understand it (Mr. Sharply, to expedite matters, positively invents a name, which the complainant repudiates), she waits to be asked a question.

The Solicitor commences—"You were, I believe, in——"

"Now," interrupts Mr. Sharply, "*Do* let her tell her own story! We *must* get on."

This, however, turns out to be about the worst way of "getting on" that could have been hit upon, as the complainant's story is chiefly about what Somebody else said (which the Magistrate won't hear), and what she told Somebody else to tell a third person not present (which the Magistrate won't receive as evidence).

"I really can't listen to this," says Mr. Sharply, frowning at the Solicitor, as much as to say "You ought to know better." Then, to the Policeman, "Call the next case."

The unfortunate complainant leaves the box, and dis-

appears, utterly bewildered. The Wavering Policeman is about to call the next case, when the next case, as it seems, calls itself, for a short man advances between the dock and the Solicitor's bench with a bagfull of papers, and addresses his Worship.

The Magistrate places himself on his elbows, and bends towards him with both hands up to his ears.

"Now then, Sir," he says, as briskly as ever (always on a sort of "one down, t'other come on" principle), "Who are you? What do you want? Go on, Sir."

The Gentleman with the Bag commences. It appears that he wants a great deal. It also appears that he has been before that Court several times before, and has an application to make. The word "application" settles *his* business at once.

"I really can't take up the public time," says Mr. Sharply "with applications. Stand down, Sir."

But the Man with a Bag hasn't come there to stand down. He insists upon the Magistrate hearing him.

"A case, Sir," the Man with the Bag goes on persistently, while Mr. Sharply stands aghast at his audacity, and looks round the court at the people and police with the kind of air with which Henry must have said of Archbishop Thomas-à-Becket, "Have I no one who will rid me of this utter bore?" I think the Wavering Policeman has some passing idea of removing the Man with a Bag, but he can't make up his mind to any decisive step.

The man proceeds—"A case, Sir, has arisen out of a matter of trespass——" Mr. Sharply frowns, and resumes

his attitude of attention, as much as to intimate that he'll just give him one more chance, and see what he's driving at—"of trespass, which is of great immediate interest to the persons concerned, and to the public in general"—movement of impatience on the part of Mr. Sharply—"and I should say that in this case"—Mr. Sharply refers to his watch—"I am the complainaint and the solicitor." Mr. Sharply all attention again. Man with Bag continues, evidently aware that the thread of his discourse may be snipped at any moment—"The ground landlord of Number Two, Fuller's Gardens, received the sum of ten shillings and sixpence previous to his bankruptcy, and"—here he warms with his subject, and addresses the Magistrate with that air of forcible conviction which should characterise a man who has thoroughly mastered the dates and facts of his case "on the second of *June*, in the year *eighteen hundred and sixty-seven*——"

"O, I can't listen to this," exclaims Mr. Sharply, shaking his head, as energetically as if he had just come up again after a dive, "Call the next case."

"But, Sir," says the Man with the Bag, appealingly. Mr. Sharply is down on him, furiously. "Don't bawl at me, Sir. Good gracious! it is to be a question whether *you* are to be heard, or I? No, Sir," seeing the man beginning again, "I *won't* have it. Go away, Sir. Here!" (to Wavering Policeman.) "Remove that person. Now, call the next case."

The "person" doesn't wait to be removed, but removes himself, bag and all, and retires, explaining his case to the

Wavering Policeman, who evidently does his best to comfort him, without committing himself to any view which may compromise him in his official character.

A vagrant, all dirt, rags, and tatters, has stepped into the dock.

"Poor fellow!" says my Aunt.

They are the first words she has uttered since the advent of Mr. Sharply, whose abrupt manner has utterly disarranged all her ideas. She is gradually recovering herself. But I perceive that she is more or less hysterical, and I begin to prepare myself for a scene.

A Policeman is in the witness-box, and takes his oath on a Testament with the greatest ease.

"Now, then," says Mr. Sharply.

The Policeman deposes that he was on duty, &c., &c., and saw, &c., &c., and warned, &c., &c. And it all rolls off his tongue as pleasantly as possible, and the Vagrant is asked if he has anything to say to Mr. Sharply on the subject; and it appearing that the Vagrant has nothing to say to *him*, after giving him one second to think it over, he (Mr. Sharply) has something to say to the Vagrant, which is, that he is committed for a month with hard labour; and this being all done, settled, and dismissed at high-steam pressure, the Vagrant is taken away by a Policeman, and justice being satisfied, Mr. Sharply darts a look at his watch, and calls for "the next case."

We have all along been expecting that ours is the next case, and my Aunt is in a frightfully nervous state, and very pale. The Rum Lady too, is becoming excited, and has her eye still fixed on "that Purkiss."

CHAPTER V.

STOUT *v.* THIN — AN INTERFERENCE — THE CLERK SQUASHED—A LAUGH IN THE WRONG PLACE—CALL NEXT CASE — THOMAS MUDDOCK — EXCITEMENT—HENRY—COMING TO THE POINT—EXAMINATION—PREVARICATION—ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF RIGHT—DEFEAT OF WRONG — END OF MY AUNT'S GREAT POLICE CASE.

OWEVER, the next case (though my Aunt is thoroughly prepared to jump up at a minute's notice, and, indeed, can hardly be said to be sitting down) is that of a stout man, without collars, against a thin man in high collars.

"Now, Sir," says Mr. Sharpley, so suddenly that the stout man looks as if he were going to have a fit, and would want his neck-tie loosened, "what is it?"

The stout man (much to the thin man's delight) seems to have some difficulty in stating his case. Whereupon the Clerk, underneath the desk, and therefore out of the Magistrate's eye, attempts to help him.

"You charge," says the Clerk, considerately, "Mr. Sniggs with refusing to allow——"

For one instant the Magistrate is puzzled as to the quarter

whence the voice proceeds, but it suddenly occurring to him that it is the Clerk's, he reaches over the desk to look at him (if he had a stick it would be exactly like *Punch* with "Joey" the *Clown*, when the latter appears at an unexpected part of the Show), and says, with cutting irony, "I don't know what may be your custom *here*, but *I* always conduct the cases in my own Court *myself*."

"But, Sir," says the Clerk, "I——"

"I don't care, Sir. I must beg you won't interfere. Now then, Sir." This last to the complainant.

But whatever matter the stout man might have had, originally, against Sniggs—the thin man, the altercation has quite put it out of his head. He looks helplessly at the Clerk, then at the Solicitors (who despise him for not having employed one of *them*), then at the Policeman, and finally at the thin man, Sniggs, who laughs contemptuously.

"Put that man out of Court!" says Mr. Sharply, nodding his head angrily at the thin man in a way which quite takes the laugh out of *him*, "I won't have it," meaning the thin man's laughing. "If you can't behave yourself, Sir, you'd better go out."

The Wavering Policeman eyes the thin man imploringly, as much as to say, "*Do* mind what he says. *Do* behave yourself. Don't *compel* me to take you up."

"Now, Sir," says the Magistrate, for the third time, to the stout complainant, "Are you going to keep us here all day? What do you charge him with?"

I believe it to be quite a chance that the stout man, being utterly confused and muddled, didn't answer "Burglary"

on the spur of the moment. His lips move, but he is silent.

"Stand down, Sir," says Mr. Sharply, utterly disgusted with the man's imbecility. "Now, next case."

The stout man is led from the box in a wandering state, and is joined by the thin man and the Wavering Policeman, who shows them out; and on the other side of the door, I suppose, they will forgive one another, and weep in each other's arms.

The next case is my Aunt's.

Thomas Muddock, the Cabman, is called. He steps into the witness-box, looking very respectable, and totally unlike the drunken man who couldn't drive my Aunt on the memorable night of her visit to my cottage.

Thomas Muddock takes his oath, and tells his story. He drove the lady from Jummin Street to the Hole, Squedgely, ten miles out of town, where he waited for her five hours, and he claims thirty-two shillings.

Which is all clear enough.

So far the Cabman has it entirely his own way. My Aunt has come out of the pew, and is clutching me by the elbow. "Where shall I go?" she asks, shaking all over.

I am hot and excited. I beg of her to keep cool. She is called. The clerk says, "Henrietta!" and then adds the surname.

Mr. Sharply only catches half, and asks, abruptly,

"Where is he? Where is Henry? Why doesn't he——"

My Aunt is beckoned by the Clerk. She has heard of people "being accommodated with a seat on the bench,

and she thinks she is to go and sit by the Magistrate, out of consideration for her sex, and tell her plain unvarnished tale confidentially. She is shaking her head, and explaining in dumb show, with her parasol, to the Clerk that she doesn't see how to get there, without climbing over the Solicitors' bench, and crossing the table, when—

"Now, then," says the Magistrate, impatiently, "where is Henry—" he can't catch the other name—"I can't wait. We must call the next case."

And the "next case" would have been called there and then, but for my Aunt trying to get into the dock, from which she is taken by a policeman, who informs her that she can stand behind the Solicitors.

She has a sort of reticule on her left arm, she has given me her parasol to hold, and she places her right hand on the back of the seat.

Seeing this figure before him, the Magistrate arrives at the conclusion that Henry is a surname, and addresses her with—

"Now, Miss Henry, what have you got to say to this?"

Up to this moment she has had a great deal to say, but it appears to have suddenly gone from her, like King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and she can only admit that Thomas Muddock *did* drive her, *did* wait for her about five hours, and that she has *not* paid him.

"Why not?" asks Mr. Sharply. Then, while my Aunt is looking piteously at me (I studiously avoid catching her eye, not wishing to appear before I am absolutely required), he turns to the Cabman,

"Did you agree for a certain sum for the job?"

The Cabman reflects.

"Did you, or did you not?" asks Mr. Sharply, who can't wait for thoughts.

"Yes," says the Cabman, with such an air of uncertainty as to the statement that Mr. Sharply eyes him distrustfully, and then wants to know "How much?"

"Well," answers Mr. Thomas Muddock, recovering himself a little, "the lady said fifteen shillings."

"For the job?" says Mr. Sharply, suggestively.

"For the job," replies the Cabman, not clearly seeing what the result of his answer may be.

"But," says my Aunt, now beginning to be quite at home, "I said distinctly that he might have to wait."

"Not five hours," says Mr. Thomas Muddock.

Mr. Sharply looks from one to the other.

"Yes," says my Aunt, "I said it might be one hour or five."

"Did you agree as to time?" asks Mr. Sharply of the Cabman.

"No," says the Cabman, "I didn't—that is—in a way—Yes."

"I don't believe a word you're saying," says Mr. Sharply; whereat my Aunt, plucking up, and addressing the Magistrate, says, "I didn't pay him, your Worship," (she is very near saying "My Lord"), "because when I wanted him at night, he was so intoxicated that he couldn't drive me."

Mr. Sharply looks fiercely at the Cabman, and wishes to know what he has to say to *that*.

Mr. Thomas Muddock has *not* much to say to *that*, but he

is understood to deny the charge in an undertone. The Magistrate eyes him suspiciously, and is about to make an observation when my Aunt lugs me into it.

"Here's my nephew, Sir, a barrister, saw him; he'll tell you, Sir." Whereat I feel that the eyes of Europe (specially, unwashed Europe) are upon me, and become very hot and uncomfortable in consequence.

"O!" says Mr. Sharply, "there are witnesses. Now, Sir!" to me.

The Cabman comes out of the box, and I go in. A stout Policeman hands me a Testament, and I take my oath to what I am going to say.

I notice that, if not badgered, it is surprising how very soon one's nervousness wears off in a witness-box, and what a strong temptation there is to become confidential with the Magistrate, or with anyone who "wishes to ask this witness a question."

"Now, Sir, tell us what happened."

I detail the facts of the Cabman's being unable to find the road, and attempt some pathos about my fear for my Aunt's safety. Having finished my facts, and got quite pleasant with Mr. Sharply, I should now like to romance a little, and introduce a joke or two, just by way of lightening the entertainment. I have a sort of latent idea that Mr. Sharply will ask me to step into his private room, or send me, by a policeman, an invitation to dinner that night. I fancy that with the second bottle of port, or the first cigar, he would say, "And now, old fellow, what *was* the truth about that Cabman, eh? I suppose he really *was* drunk,

eh?" But this is an ideal Sharply at home, and not Sharply the real on the bench.

This occurs to me in the few seconds that Mr. Sharply takes to consider the case, and he interrupts my reflections with—

"What do you consider the right fare to your house?"

I answer boldly, "Eight shillings," this being rather a fancy price of my own than what I am obliged to give when I take a cab from town to my Cottage near a Wood, known as "The Hole," near Squedgely, Middlesex.

"Twelve shillings there and back, you would consider quite sufficient?" asks Mr. Sharply, giving the finishing touches to the case. I reply, that this sum would be, in my opinion, Munificent. [What a row there would have been at my gate had I ever offered at cabman this sum as his fare "there" from town, let alone "and back."]

Mr. Sharply decides in a rapid, off-hand manner. "You'll" (to my Aunt) "pay him twelve shillings. Cabman pay his own costs. Now, then, call the next case."

I think the next case must be that of our friend the Rum Lady, as I see the dreaded Purkiss rising to address the Magistrate as we are leaving the Court.

I look back once, tenderly, at Mr. Sharply, with a sort of lingering idea that he will yet send me the invitation to dinner, or, at all events, wave his hand to me genially from the bench. Nothing of the sort. I and my Aunt's case have gone clean out of his head, and he is telling Mr. Purkiss "that he really can't listen to this; that he hasn't got time for these details;" and becoming once more so

irritable that even the dreaded Purkiss will be quenched, and the Rum Lady remain unheard.

On mature reflection, it occurs to me that Mr. Sharply is *the* right man in the right place, and his brisk method of sifting the Wheat from the intolerable amount of Chaff, is, on the whole, beneficial to the public.

The following day my Aunt comes down to see me. She brings with her all the day's newspapers. The Case has not been reported in any one of them. She is in consequence very much disappointed. "If," she says, "I had lost it, you may depend upon it all London would have been reading about it now."

She begs me to take up the study of the Law, and has the happiness to announce that her solicitor has written to her to say that the Legacy will be duly paid on a certain day, but that he must request the favour of an interview.

"If," she adds, as she steps into her fly, "this leads to any Chancery suit, I will tell my solicitor that he had better come to you."

I thank her, and determine to look up the subject, generally, in the interim. However, so ends my Aunt's great Police Case, and I have as yet had no intimation of an impending Chancery suit.

Our Representative Man.

OUR REPRESENTATIVE MAN.

CHAPTER I.

HE RIDES IN A CAB OR TWO, AND FAITHFULLY REPORTS THEREON TO THE EDITOR.

HILE You ride in your coach and four, loll in your Victoria and pair by the banks of the blue Serpentine, or wave your hand indolently from your cushioned barouche on your road to Richmond, I, Sir, have to represent You in vehicles licensed to carry twenty-six people at once, or, at best, to take only two inside.

Hence it is that Your Representative is one of the greatest employers of London Cabs. He is a fortune to the drivers and proprietors, as, being of a timid and retiring disposition (wherever there's a chance of a row), and, never having acquired proficiency in the art of self-defence, he invariably gives at least sixpence over the regular fare, so as to avoid

all discussion and interchange of compliments, whereat, not having crushing repartees ready at hand, Your Representative generally gets worsted, after having been held up to the execration of a dirty crowd as a penurious aristocrat grinding down the honest working man, or having been chaffed out of his life by the unscrupulous driver in front of the open windows of his (Your Representative's) Club.

The Cabman has an advantage, in badinage, over his respectable fare, similar to that possessed by the French over the English Dramatists in writing for the stage, that is, they have such a field, and such scope; they can say anything and everything, while the virtuous fare is gagged by his respectability as tightly as is a criminal on his trial by the English law. Brilliancy is lost on a cabman; he winks at your sky-rocket of wit, which goes far above his head, and is down upon you with his bomb-shell.

Therefore, Sir, I pay, as the stage Yankee speaks, through the nose. But what do I get in return for this? Thanks? Rarely. What have I previously got for it? Nothing: except twenty minutes worth of worry, nervousness, danger, jolting, anger, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness.

Were all Cabs good in every respect, the lives of vehicle-patronising Londoners would be lengthened by many years.

Sir, emphatically, our London Cabs, taking them all round (Heaven forbid I should have to do so!), are what *Hamlet* said the player's "faces" were, in Act iii., Sc. 2, where *Mr. Lucianus* enters to go through his part, and is most rudely interrupted by his highly educated audience. (Shakspeare evidently meant this as a satire on some of the swells of his

day who would talk aloud during the performance. But this by the way.)

You do not, perhaps, expect much from a Four-wheeler, but, hang it, you do from a Hansom. Hansoms now-a-days are a snare and a delusion. They are calculated to ruin your hat, and your temper. There is none good, no, scarcely one. Like the gods of the Heathen, they are all become abominable. I had not intended writing this, but the edifice of injuries was crowned on my way to the International Exhibition, when I was going, last week, to represent you, Sir, at the Cookery Lecture, and I can no longer control my just indignation. 'Tis the last bluebottle that rouses the sleeping Lion (I am getting up my Eastern proverbs for the Shah's visit), and the Hansom that took me to South Kensington caused me to shed tears of vexation.

I selected him, from many others, with such care and discrimination, as I should have used, at Tattersall's, in buying a horse. I eyed his points—cab-horses have heaps of points, all more or less prominent—and I took him after dismissing three others who sought my favours.

Let me tell you of one Hansom refused by me earlier in the day. It came out of a stable-yard: the horse was being led by an ostler; the driver (dressed in a Jemmy-Jessamy sporting style, with a wisp of dark blue ribbon round his whip, probably left there under the impression that the University boat-race was still going on, as he'd been all this time getting to it) was urging him by jerking the loose reins, and making noises which were all more or less variations on such original themes as "Tchk! get along, Ky'up!" and so forth,

while, the animal itself was limping and halting as though he were trying his legs, one after the other, for the first time in his life, and was doubtful of their capabilities. The wretched machine (including the horse in this term) stumbled along, and the man had the impudence, the coolness, the unspeakable effrontery, to hail *me*, and say, "Hansom, Sir?" But then and there I had my revenge. I replied, with biting sarcasm, but ineffable politeness, "No thank you, *I'm in a hurry*." After this I shot on, like the advertising picture of Mr. Walkingfast, the bootmaker (capital name!), and left the poor crazy wreck to flounder about as best, or worst, it might. I just heard him anathematising me, the cab, and the horse, as I turned the corner. Excuse me if I am proud of the exploit: it may be weak, but seeing that it is scoring the bull's eye after a quarter of a century of misses, I *do* think the exultation pardonable. I make a present of my repartee to the public. It will always tell: it will never grow old: it will improve by use: it will be better for keeping—in short, like every other effort of genius, it is not for an age, but for all time.

I will not here dwell on the dangers and difficulties of entry common to all Hansoms, as to what you're to lay hold of, what you're not to lay hold of, what you're to cling to, when you're to cling to it, how you've got to keep your eye on the hind quarters of the horse, how you're to back in, still holding on to something, and how you're to stoop cautiously, for fear of the loosely strapped-up window catching your neatly-brushed hat—on these troubles I will not now dilate: another time. Sir, I was in a hurry, as I often am; And

when in a hurry, there is nothing in nature so irritating as a slow Hansom. This cab was not only slow, it was doddling; that's the word, doddling. Also, it was waggling; going from one side to the other, like one of those jointed toy-serpents that you hold by the tail, and making very little more progress. To whichever side it swerved, it got into danger; in avoiding a cart on the left, it threatened an omnibus on the right; in giving a wide berth to a waggon approaching, it narrowly escaped the hind wheel of a barouche passing us. Life was *pro tem.* not worth having on such terms. It was sudden extinction, or premature greyness. It was Westminster Abbey, or Mr. Somebody's Hair-restorer. O pilot! 'twas an awful night—I mean a fearful drive! The horse was the most perfect *multum in parvo* I had ever seen. I mean he was too small for the cab every way, and he had nearly every fault that you could imagine in so small a compass. He had a kink in his moral and physical being, and couldn't go straight; he stumbled a little, he jibbed a little, he kicked a little, he chucked himself up, quite frolicsomely, a little, he trotted a little, he cantered a little, he walked a little—in fact, he did everything a little and nothing well, or for long. The trick which was the most unsatisfactory and perplexing to the person inside was a dejected way he had, after the failure of any great effort at breaking into a canter, of hanging his head so low as to be completely out of sight. For minutes, while going down Piccadilly hill, there was nothing before me but the headless trunk of a horse, slowly and unevenly trotting. It was ghostly—it was Gustave-Doré-ish. I had a mind to

push up the little peep-show trap above, and have a look at the driver, to see that he'd got *his* head on all right. I became nervous: I began to think that all this was some horrid dream, and that I was in the hands of a goblin cab-man driving a night-mare.

We passed nothing; we followed everything. I envied people in four-wheelers and 'busses. I growled to myself; I implored him through the trap, I urged him onward by drawing his attention to the fact that a 'bus which had stopped three times on the same route had always caught us up, and passed us. The driver replied, "All right!" to me, and said "Tchk!" to the headless horse, which responded to the very gentle touch of the whip (which the man used as if it had been a fishing-rod, and he were dropping a hook with ground-bait, very quietly, into a stream) by jibbing, tossing its head, cantering, and then relapsing into the old despondent trot.

Sir, I paid that man one sixpence, at least, over and above his fare. I made no remark. I was speechless with gratitude for my safety. Had the authorities been inclined to permit it, I would have gone into the Albert Hall, and celebrated my safe arrival with a piece of sacred music (my own composition) on the organ, which should have been afterwards known, like the "Gottingen *Te Deum*," as the Got-back-again *Te Deum*.

However, were I always to insist upon performing this on the Albert Hall instrument whenever I had survived a drive in a cab, I should be the most voluminous composer of this or any other time, and the organ would soon be worn out.

Another day I selected a brilliant-looking affair. Black turned up with blue and blue turned up with black, silver-plated harness, a horse of a peculiar colour, not unlike that of the variegated granite rocks on the Jersey coast—an excellent notion, by the way, for material for the animal in an equestrian statue—and reminding me forcibly of the sand in one of those glass mementos, bell-shaped, of the Isle of Wight called a "Trifle from Shanklin," and meant, if used properly, for a paper weight. Would you gather from this that it was a sort of roan? I believe it was. Somebody to whom I described this said, "Oh! that was a Strawberry Dun." It might have been, but it seemed to me what a strawberry might look like under a sharp attack of measles. He was stepping along, as proud as a peacock, when I hired him.

From the moment I got in, bumping my hat as usual, the Strawberry Dun showed what a trained humbug of a steed he was. His airy manners forsook him completely; he jogged along at a slow pace, until I began to think that "I really *would* speak to the driver"—when all of a sudden he plucked up as we were crossing a thoroughfare, and in glorious style charged another Hansom which was driving out of a street at right angles to us. How a collision, in which the horse would have been the principal sufferer, was avoided, I do not know, but avoided it was, and he went on in his old butter-and-egg fashion, until a nasty corner offered him a chance of displaying his original genius. He was going round this as though he were practically discovering some new force in nature, when his knees failed him, and,

after recovering from such a stumble as would have ruined less gifted creatures for life, he resumed his former ruminative trot. The Cabman's knowledge of short cuts would have been most praiseworthy, if in every case the short cuts had not been blocked up by coal-carts empty, coal-carts full, carts without coal, carts with sacks, and trucks; also cabs, meeting us where there was only room for one at a time, which disputed the ground inch by inch, and before which we had to retire. The Strawberry Dun performed this graceful act to perfection. It only wanted music to have made it worthy of a circus.

I paid this Cabman his exact fare, and he asked me, "How's one to live if one only has his 'xact fare?" I did not stop to answer the conundrum.

Another horse was what I believe is called "a weed." He was long, bony, lanky, rat-tailed, and long-legged. He looked like pace. When I was seated in the cab, however, he went either as if he were of an inquiring disposition, and wanted to see what sort of fare he was taking, or as if he had a stiff neck, and was obliged to keep his head always turned quite round to the right. Perhaps this was his merit, and he saw what to avoid in front and at the back. If so, he went cautiously, and walked round the corners.

In fact we walked the greater part of the time. When I remonstrated, the man said, "He'd ha' gone faster if he'd known as I was in a hurry;" but they always have some answer, and it is surprising if it isn't of the sort to which repartee is impossible in the mouth of

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER A VISIT TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT, REPORTS THEREUPON TO THE EDITOR. SUGGESTIONS TO INTENDING YACHTISTS.

RULY, Sir, I have been representing you, nautically, and you did not know it. No! Like one of "the gentlemen of England who live at home at ease," you were reclining in the old arm-chair, in the chimney corner, of course with the fire out, and only in order to get a draught of fresh air from the chimney itself,—you, I say, were thus reclining, little wotting, or (to sound nautically) little recking ("spell it with a w, my Lord") of the dangers which Your Representative was incurring 'twixt Southsea and Cowes.

Belay, you land lubbers! 'Twas in Stokes' Bay, or, to be accurate, 'twas off the Southsea Pier, I waved a sorrowful adieu to the Poll of my heart, and bade a long farewell to the shores of Old England, intending to remain in the Isle of Wight from, at all events, Friday afternoon till Monday morning. A brisk breeze sprang up, the sparkling waves danced with joy, as, answering to her helm, the Saucy (I forget her name) bared her snowy bosom to the sun, and, swan-like. glided o'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea.

I write, observe, in a poetic vein; for the craft was a steamer, without sails, and singularly grubby for such a spick-and-span place as she was bound for. As to that epithet of Lord Byron's, "The Dark-Blue Sea," he evidently refers to the See of Oxford, the only one whose colour is, legitimately, dark blue. But, avast jesting, my messmates! and, in a general way, Yeo ho!

I had gathered, from information I had received, that Cowes was *en fête*, and therefore, as Your Representative, I was dressed accordingly. Splice your old timbers! it would have done good to the cockles of your heart of oak to have seen me in a straw hat, real Panama, purchased in Germany, and warranted to be folded up and stowed away in your waistcoat pocket, a blue blouse, a bright sunset evening tie, underlying a striped turn-down collar, while below I was encased in a pair of ducks white as the riven snow, taut at the top, but large and loose at the point where they fall over the shoe. (This is, perhaps, a lengthy description, but appreciate its delicacy, which resembles that of the excellent maiden lady who would not pronounce the word "Rotterdam" on account of its improper termination, and admit that if it be lengthy, it is, at least, not so broad as it is long.)

As we neared Cowes we passed through a fleet of yachts, and Your Representative went aloft, that is stood up, and kept a bright look-out, in the hopes of recognising some one on board one of these aristocratic craft who would hail him with a cheery "Ahoy! Messmate!" and ask him to come off to dinner. I daresay there were several doing this in the

distance, but, as we sped along, my eye, unaided, was not arrested by any festive signals, nor did either six bells, or two guns, announce the preparations for dinner.

By the time I had got my sea legs on, I had to get 'em off again, and walk ashore. I had arrived on the night of R.Y.S. Ball, and a *queue* of amateur tars were awaiting their turn at the hairdresser's, who, on this sultry day, was melting under the heavy work, like his own pomatum before a fire.

After my sea-voyage, I too wanted renovating with mechanical brushing, and the grateful shampoo, without which I foresaw I should not enjoy my dinner. Shampoo first, Champagne afterwards. However, I could not be attended to for at least an hour, so I wandered forth into the town, and paused, in the first place, before a shop-window which reflected me like a pier-glass. (Nautical *jeu de mot.* No gentleman staying at the sea-side perfect without a pier-glass. This is the effect of the briny breezes on Your Representative.)

I was astonished. My noble Panama, once the pride of a fashionable watering-place in Germany, by constant foldings and frequent battlings with the stormy winds, had got hopelessly out of shape. Here let me warn my readers against a Panama, except only for domestic wear, where nobody's looking. A Panama, price about four guineas, is generally recommended as "a hat, Sir, that'll last you your lifetime." Quite so: it will, and a precious bore it becomes. Fashions change, but there's your Panama, always the same. No, not always, for having bought it for its "portability" (everything "portable" is, generally speaking, a mistake), you have fre-

quently folded it up and stowed it away, in order to prove to your friends what a valuable acquisition your new purchase is, and thus whatever shape it might have had to start with, has been clean taken out of it. This results in "blocking and cleaning"—a process which will cost about four guineas more, per annum. So, on the whole, if the hat *does* last your lifetime, as it undoubtedly will unless you destroy it, or lose it, you will bequeath a valuable heirloom to your family. Say you purchase it when you are thirty, and live till seventy, then the original cost being four guineas, and "blocking and cleaning" four more per annum, we get a total of about a hundred and seventy-two pounds, which represents the cost of the Panama hat at the time of your lamented decease.

Costume at the sea-side is everything, especially at Cowes, where you are nothing unless nautical; or, rather, as that's too much of a rough sea-doggy word, I should say yachtical. In Cowes the toy-shops are generally of a marine turn—toy sailors, dolls in yachting costume, boats of all sizes, cutters, yawls, and luggers. I noticed a brightly-painted Noah's ark on a shelf, in dock, as it were, being as much out of date as Nelson's flag-ship among the ironclads. Shops having professionally nothing of a nautical character about them, go in for it by hanging up the picture of a fearful wreck.

As for the tailors, the haberdashers, bootmakers, and the linen-drapers, they display in every available space blue cloth, straw hats with names of yachts on the ribands, deck shoes, and sailor costumes for ladies. Skippers meet you on every turn, as do also first and second mates, with sailors carrying provision-baskets. The conversation everywhere is

about yachting: which won what, what came in when, and why the other didn't this time but would next, and so on. Guns at night. Somebody told me that they fired at the sun as it went down behind the horizon; which seemed a puerile sport. I am more inclined to believe that it was intended, not as a shot at the great luminary, but as a parting salute on his retiring for the evening.

The general idea conveyed by the appearance of Cowes to the mind of Your Representative was that a naval engagement was going on somewhere, perhaps in "the Roads" (absurd place, of course, for a naval engagement), and that the reserves were making the best of "ten minutes allowed for refreshment," on the island, before joining the battle.

But the great thing at Cowes is to master the difficulty of "*How to look like it.*"

First, two weeks as a regular Yachtsman of the R.Y.S. evidently means ten thousand a year, at least. But how does little Tom Tuppenny manage to do it on his three or four hundred per annum at most? Why, he has mastered the secret of "*how to look like it.*" And this is it for Cowes: dress in yachting costume, ready, as it were, for action. If you know anyone with a yacht, and you can get an invitation, do so, of course; only in this case, mind, you must have no name on the hat-riband. If you have no yachting acquaintance, look over the list of yachts, and buy a riband *with a name that isn't in the Catalogue.*

This will give you an opportunity of spinning a yarn about, "Confound it, 'bliged to put into dock. Just off for

Sweden. All hands to pump. Had to put back," &c. Or you can use strong language about your "Confounded Captain, who always *will* mistake your sailing orders, and who ought to have met you at Cowes."

Secondly, the purchase of a telescope (one second-hand, and utterly out of order, can be got for a mere trifle) is a necessity, as, whenever there's nothing else to be done at Cowes, the rule is to look through a glass of some sort, if a telescope, so much the better. The object is unimportant; but, if you *must* have one as a subject of conversation, you can always be on the look out for your boat, or for your confounded Captain (call him Captain Harris), who *won't* be punctual, hang him! and whom you intend, you can say severely, to dismiss the instant he arrives.

This method of "looking like it" will only cost you your ordinary living, and with a trip or two on the steamboat round the island and over to Southampton and Portsmouth (always, of course, in search of your missing idiotic Captain —(for you must keep up the character), you'll have had most of the pleasure of yachting without any of the expense or bother attached to yacht-ownership.

A propos of "ownership," a nautical *jeu de mot* (and it's just as well to have these things ready) would be that the possession of a Yacht can't be properly described as Own-a-ship.

Also, with perfect truth, anyone who follows the above directions will be able to say to a landsman, "Ah, my boy! there's a heap of pleasure to be got out of a yacht!"—and you will make a mental reservation to the effect that what-

ever nautical pleasure you had at Cowes, you did get *out* of a yacht, and not *in* it.

But, avast heaving! or, my worthy Skipper, you will be overhauling

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE.

CHAPTER III.

(SOMETHING MORE ABOUT THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

IR, Your Representative, having purchased a ready-made yachting suit, with a straw hat labelled (on the riband) *Elvira* (the man wanted to palm off on me one with *Magnetia* on it, but I was not to be taken in), felt myself quite the Yachtsman among the Dukes, Princes, Monseigneurs, Duchesses, Lords and Ladies, who crowd the one narrow street and the shore.

Why do I, as representing You, Sir, prefer, far prefer, the gay and genuine nobility of Cowes, to the sixty-per-cent foreign Barons at Brighton? Why? Because I like the real Earls and Countesses, but shrink from the sham Counts with their Discountesses. If I am to be a Snob, let me be a Yachting Snob. Belay! shiver my marlinspikes! and avast there! For an instant I forgot that the individual must be merged, nay obliterated in The Representative.

You can always avoid loneliness at Cowes, even if you are there quite alone and knowing no one, by speaking to the Signalman at the R. Y. S. Club-house, known as "The Castle." He is civil; not too civil, and reckons you up in no time. This is very clever on his part, as he never looks at you while talking, being always occupied with conning

something in the offing through a telescope. It struck me that he is so accustomed to this as to be unable to see without it, and that consequently he had sighted me a long way off, and had reckoned up the full importance of *Elvira* on my hat.

However, the value of a chat with him is, that, at no expense, unless you suggest a glass of wine (he is too great a swell for beer), you can pass in the eyes of the admiring public for a member of the Club in whose grounds you are standing. After this, you can walk with a prouder air. Should the Signalman be your only acquaintance, and you are not on speaking terms with members of the Royal Family, or any of the noblemen and titled gentry, your time (this to the reader) will hang a bit heavy on your hands, and I advise you, as you value your holiday, to take the steamer for Ryde; for, after all, you are lost at Cowes; Ryde is the better place of the two, and from Ryde you can go anywhere by coast, train, or boat, which you can't from Cowes. Your Representative was much struck by the smallness of the Island, and everything in it. The whole thing is a toy. The Tramway, to begin with, is a toy, brightly coloured, with a neat conductor. The little Railway Station is a toy; so's the miniature train, which should be wound up and go by clockwork instead of steam. Then the hills, and the plains, and the bridge, and the little people walking about, and the little shops and the little shopkeepers, all toys, every one of them, and the whole thing could be stowed away with much neatness and precision in a few boxes such as the Germans make for toy-packing. Shanklin is just what you'll see in one of the toyshop windows

in Regent Street, only that when Your Representative visited it the Waterfall hadn't been wound up, and nothing was playing a tune. This was unfair, as I had to pay eighteenpence for seeing this Shanklin toy. That one-and-six at the gate, and the way it was got out of me, quite spoiled the romance of a stroll through Shanklin Chine. You wander on under overhanging trees, and by the side of glistening rocks, you shudder at the depth below, and you gaze enraptured at the glimpse of blue sky through the fretwork of foliage above, and you soliloquise aloud, or to yourself. I reached that poetic point when one feels inclined (as I felt representing *You*, Sir), to pour forth my whole soul in some sympathetic ear; and at this minute my eye lighted upon a young and lovely brunette standing pensively by a rustic bridge gazing out toward the sea; I paused, for not by a footfall would I have disturbed her meditation.

However, she had caught the sound of my fairy-like step (I was weighed the other day, and am able on authority to correct the report about my walking fourteen stone in my boots), and, sighing gently, she turned her head towards me.

I approached the Bridge, and, with that courtliness which distinguishes any one, Sir, who represents You as You ought to be represented (a photograph generally flatters the original), I raised my hat, and respectfully, but cheerfully, alluded to the beauty of the weather, the poetic inspiration of so lovely a spot, and awaited her reply.

Ah, Sir! such soft eyes! And I saw that she was about to reply.

She did. She said—

"Yes, there ain't a many people 'ere to-day, and I ain't done much. It's sixpence is the regular thing, but it's what you like to give the gal, Sir."

I shuddered. The romance had vanished. She *had* change for half-a-crown, that is, she gave me a shilling, said "Thankye, Sir," showed me out through a gate, which she locked on the inside, and then I was alone on Shanklin Beach—alone with the bathing-machines.

Shanklin will be a great place one of these days, when the climate is changed and the projected buildings are finished.

Your Representative dined at Shanklin, and, as up to six in the afternoon there is nothing to do at Shanklin, and after that hour still less, I returned by the up-train to Ryde.

As regards any public amusement, the evenings at Ryde are a trifle dull. However, if fine, everybody is out till they turn in for the night; and, if wet, everybody turns in, and won't go out. Ventriloquists and Conjurors occasionally try their luck here, and do well, I believe, *for once only*.

At one time I thought of turning this absence of entertainment to as good account as did an enterprising gentleman with a limited knowledge of legerdemain in California. It occurred to me that I might get *one* good house, and that then I should have to leave before the performance was over, with, of course, the cash-box, so as to save that valuable article from the fury of the audience. It was the story of the above-mentioned conjuror in the gold regions that suggested the idea. His name was Timmins, or something like it, and he knew about as many tricks as would make him an agreeable after-dinner companion when the conversation flagged.

However, the worse the material the greater the speculation.

A brilliant idea occurred to the *entrepreneur*, who immediately advertised Timmins as "The Great Basilikon Thaumaturgist," and fitted him with a programme announcing such wonders as had never before been seen there or anywhere else. Elephants were to fly out of snuff-boxes, a living head would walk and talk in the air; in fact, there was no limit to the marvels, except that at the foot of the bill was an intimation to the effect that "*this programme might be varied*"—and so it was considerably. But there was one good house at all events. "The Great Basilikon Thaumaturgist" disappeared only to re-appear with some other title elsewhere, probably in America, as a Lieutenant, a Colonel, or a Doctor, for it is noticeable that these peripatetic legerdemainists are nothing unless dubbed with some military or learned prefix.

Had I but known five tricks, three with cards and two without, I would have given an evening with Colonel Flix. I should have chosen this title, it's so vague—"Colonel Flix, the Celebrated Double-handed Isaurian Trompydeuxœilist and Spiritualistic Asmodeusexmachinistical Delusoriat; with" (of course) "testimonials from all the Crowned Heads of Europe who have witnessed my astounding performances."

As representing You, Sir, I am the soul of honour, and, therefore, I did not venture upon the above entertainment. No; I went to bed early, and dreamt that I was King of the Isle of Wight.

O! but if I were! "*Si j'étais Roi de Bœotie!*" What

an army and navy I'd have! England should tremble every morning, and the Stock Exchange would be crowded an hour and a half before the usual time by excited Brokers, eager for the latest news from the Island.

There should be a regiment called the Black Gang Chiners, or Black Gang Chinese, a troop, or *troupe* (for it sounds more like some new form of Christy Minstrels; not before it's wanted by the way), which should strike terror to the hearts of the foe. What a band should accompany this picked body of men! Every known instrument played by its own unequalled professor, from the tom-tom to the triangle and bones, and Jew's-harp. Jew's-harp! then, again—I'd re-establish the People on certain conditions (financial and favourable, of course), and they should have the sole right to the left-off army clothing. There should be equal laws, and but one punishment for everything. This last should be redeemable by a fine to be paid into the Royal Treasury. The Government would be Autocratic and Paternal; and I should have gambling-tables at all the principal towns. The Prince of Monaco would be nowhere when compared with the Emperor of the Isle of Wight. It would be necessary to take a name, establish a dynasty, and an aristocracy. The first nobleman would be the Pier at Ryde. This reminds me that the place of Court Jester would not be long vacant; but on terms—viz., one old joke, or twice the same joke before the same company, and "Off with his head!" a sentence which would be immediately carried into execution, unless a fine equivalent to the offence were paid down *sur le champ*.

This phrase reminds me that the language of the Court should be French. What fun the first six months of my reign would be ! Everybody with a grammar in one pocket, a dictionary in the other, and a conversation-book in his hand. But at present I am not King of the Island, but content to be devotedly,

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE.

CHAPTER IV.

REPORTS HIMSELF AFTER A BRIEF VACATION.

ES, Sir, for once and away—I add "and away" because I have just returned from the Continong—I must claim to represent myself. Myself *en vacance*—myself in the enjoyment of a short, alas! too short, vacation. I travelled with my second step-grandmother (my grandfather—Heaven rest him!—having married thrice, and left his last and youngest to bless his memory), and a well-informed friend, who said before we started that he had long ago visited the places where we intended going, knew them all by heart, and could give us every possible information. Wasn't he to be a very useful person? Wouldn't any one have taken him on such a recommendation (his own)? No matter what you, Sir, would or would not have done in a similar position, we did—we embraced him, *Ma belle Grand' mère la deuxième, et moi*—we embraced him with effusion, considered that we had a treasure, and consulted him as to the future of our route.

Our united ages amounted to——but this is unimportant as we were more than half-price on every line, and a child's ticket was out of the question, though in *La belle Grand's* case it was at first worth consideration.

Sir, when I travel, I travel with an object. I do not allude to either of my companions, in making the above statement. One object was, to compare great things with small—to compare, *i. e.*, the hotel bills of England—of merry England —with those of France, where live "our lively neighbours." Another object was to note down the simplest, most effective, prettiest, and most satisfying-at-the-price dishes, and learn something in addition to the knowledge of economising resources which I have already, in times past, gained from a close observance of many a Continental *table d' hôte*.

I chose Brittany.

I had been there and still would go.

Rule Brittania! *Les Brétons ne seront jamais esclaves ! !* I understand, *now*, what this means. It never did apply to us modern Britons, but to the ancient and present Bretons, and observe Breton in the Masculine, for the Bretonne is in quite another pair of *sabots*. The Bretonne will always be a slave, if she goes on as she is now, while the brave Breton will be her master.

Who carries the large umbrella, the baskets, the wood, the sacks? The Bretonne.

Who rides the donkey, and smokes his pipe leisurely? The Breton.

Who toils in the field, cooks the dinner, and waits at table? The Bretonne.

Who strolls out to see that his wife and daughters are well employed, and then strolls back again with an appetite for dinner? The Breton.

If the cosmopolitan traveller, who would do in Rome as

the Romans do, will insist on doing in Brittany as the Bretons do, then if he has the good fortune to be travelling with his aunt, wife, daughter, or grandmother, let him at once in fine weather, load her with his Ulster coat, his umbrella, his rugs, his stick, his carpet-bag, while he himself can lounge along the road with a cigar in his mouth, and a light, joyous heart in his bosom.

I pointed this out to my elderly relative, and rather than run the risk of being burdened *à la mode de Bretagne*, she willingly paid for *voitures* to wherever we wanted to go. The Ulsters and carpet-bags were, as it were, hung *in terrorem* over her head. She was Mrs. Damocles out for a holiday.

Though my object was, as already stated, to mark prices and dishes, yet did I not think it necessary to invest in a "Cook." The travelling tickets issued by this remarkable and energetic creation of the nineteenth century tend to inundate the Continent with a flood of omnivorous tourists, and, by consequence, tend to raise the prices everywhere, and to Anglicise the hotel dinners; so that there may be at last a second application of the old proverb, that "Too many Cooks spoil the broth." Such, Sir, is my own personal and private opinion; I may be wrong; I often am when representing myself, as on this occasion.

Brittany, however, is still comparatively unknown to English tourists, though familiar to all Jerseymen, who find themselves usually as much at home at such an out-of-the-way place as St. Quai, as they would be among the *patois*-speak-

ing children on the rocks off Sorel Point in their own picturesque island.

At Dinan, however, there has been for a long time an English Colony and an English Club, but these "*Insulaires*" (as the guide books call them) have not caused any perceptible alteration in the habits and customs of the inhabitants.

But to the point of this little tour. How comes it that, in such French towns as find their equivalents in Chichester, Winchester, and in most of our Cathedral and market towns, I can have my bed-room (so furnished as to serve for a sitting-room) on the first-floor, and a better — far better — breakfast, luncheon, and dinner, with "ordinary wine," and coffee afterwards, for seven shillings a day, at the most, and I can't get off in England under, at least, twice that sum, *per diem*, paid for a gross monotony of roast beef, boiled beef, strong gravy soup, fried soles, chops, and Worcester Sauce, boiled eggs, ham and eggs, thick coffee, and adulterated tea?

And then, in country towns, where could I take my Grandmother to dine? At a farmers' ordinary? Can I take her to any haphazard coffee-room, with its dingy, fly-stained paper, its heavy-looking tables, its sepulchral smell, and its chance rough-and-ready customers? No, a private room is forced upon me. I can't help it, I must have it, and must pay for it.

How many delicious, inexpensive, tasty courses did we not get at the Hôtel de France at Dol-de-Bretagne? How

many? I do not know—I stopped counting at number seven, when I was *au bout de mes forces.*

For the benefit of intending tourists, let your own carpet-bagman recommend this Hôtel de France at Dol, kept by Madame Raveaud, most amiable and charming of hostesses. Here my step-grand-mother had a room in which she could have given a ball had she been so minded, with four windows commanding good look-outs, and altogether of a cleanliness which really ran godliness uncommonly hard. This chamber was two francs a day: first floor, mind, only one-and-eightpence. At an English hotel, similarly situated, for less accommodation I have paid nearly three times the sum.

I find on my arrival in England that Mrs. King at the British Association Meeting has been trying to induce us to combine our resources, and our sauces, live in one happy family, and attend more carefully to the kitchen economy. Bless her heart! we needn't live as "one harmonious whole" in order to arrive at a *consommé* "devoutly to be wished."

Let every lady when travelling note down certain dishes, find out how they are made, and establish her own private cookery-book. A franc here and there will be well spent in acquiring this knowledge. This is the advice of one who has done it, and is always doing it. A combination table is the result, that is, you have the pick of all countries, and if, Madame, *you will only see to it yourself*, and not confide in even the "most trustworthy person in the world" (nearly every household is blighted by one of these "inestimable

treasures"), you may depend upon it that the result will be, as the toasts phrase it, "your health and happiness."

For the present I am, Sir,

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE.

P.S.—I'll drop you another line on this topic of the day.

CHAPTER V.

REPRESENTS HIMSELF AS EN VOYAGE, AND SAFELY RETURNS TO HIS NATIVE COUNTRY.

S a useful hint, Sir, to intending tourists in Brittany, remember that, however powerful may be the Silver Key, you must always have ready a neat set of compliments wherewith to oil the locks. Also, stick to your traps, for, as my Step-Grandmother says, "A Fool and his luggage are soon parted."

We did all the environs of Dinan in a triumphal chariot. Having come out for a drive, we flatly refused to descend and eke out the time by walking to points of view. The Driver tried very hard to induce us. With a cracking of whip, a jangling of bells, and a hullabaloo enough to have alarmed even a Breton village on a sultry day, he pulled up his noble steeds at the border of a grand avenue, about two hundred yards in length by a hundred in breadth, at the end of which we saw what appeared to us a dirty, old, broken, useless, and unused pump.

"There it is!" cried the man, waving his whip, and trying to dance himself into an ecstacy of admiration and delight, as he held the carriage-door open. "There's the fountain!

There's the spring! It is magnificent. All the world descends here for to see the spring!"

"Is that it?" we asked, pointing to the pump.

"Oui-dam. Yes, certainly, that's it," said the brave Breton.

But we wouldn't budge. We told him it was nothing, and not worth taking two steps to see; whereupon he shrugged his shoulders, his eyes twinkled with humour, and he admitted that we were quite right; adding that, after all, everything round about was pretty much like this; and, in fact, he began to depreciate all the ordinary excursions from Dinan, except one really beautiful route, which he would show us. Of course this resulted in his keeping us out double the time we had bargained for, but it was well worth the money.

In driving through a new country it was, I had hitherto considered, and so also had my second Step-Grandmother, a great thing to have with us a Well-informed Friend, who "knew the place well, and had seen most of it before."

He had, it turned out, utterly forgotten all about it. His explanation was that the place had been so altered since his last visit. As, however, all the most recent guide-books state that in their principal characteristic features neither the towns nor villages of Brittany have undergone any change for the last six hundred years, this computation would make my Well-informed Friend a Patriarch of some considerable standing, and first cousin, perhaps, to the Wandering Jew.

He made up for this, however, by being highly instructive.

His plan of imparting information to us as we drove along, seemed to be based upon the same motive as that which induced the *simple soldat* in *La Grande Duchesse* to ask for a schoolmaster's place, "in order that he might learn something himself."

"This," said my Well-informed Friend, as we drove along the road 'twixt Dinan and Dol, "is an interesting country. Let me see, this was the great place for the Vendéens."

"The who?" asked my Grandmother.

"The Vendéens," replied my Well-informed Friend, adding immediately, as he turned to me, "wasn't it?" as if he still had his doubts of his own historical accuracy.

I asked him, "Why were the Vendéens so called?"

"Well, let me see," he observed, meditatively, "they were in the Revolution,"—this is always a safe thing to say of any Frenchmen—"and were a sort of sharpshooters, eh, weren't they?" I return that I am depending upon him for information.

"Well," he answered, with, probably, an inward resolve to look up the whole subject the instant he should get home among his books, "the Vendéens were like the *franc-tireurs*, and their name was something to do with—I fancy, I don't say I am absolutely right—with Vendetta; and they took a vow of eternal vengeance, and so on."

"But," I remark, "the Vendetta was Corsican."

"Exactly," returned my Well-informed Friend; "why not? Napoleon was a Corsican, wasn't he?"

This was, evidently, decisive, and as I had nothing to say for or against it, we set ourselves to admire the vast panorama

of the thickly-wooded country by which we seemed to be edged in on every side. My Well-informed Friend improved the occasion by giving us a few statistics on apple-growing. The statistics were, on examination, limited to the information that Devonshire and Cornwall were great apple counties, that Brittany resembled both these, in having plenty of orchards, and that he himself invariably took cider-cup at his Club in summer, which of course went far to encourage the general trade in England and France.

My Well-informed Friend was immense on architecture. When we visited a Cathedral or any ancient church, my Step-Grandmother begged that we might have a verger, or some one who knew all about it.

"*I* can tell you all about it," said my Well-informed Friend, qualifying this assertion immediately afterwards by adding, "That is, quite as much as you'll want to know."

My Grandmother yielded at first, and so did I. When we were quit of my Well-informed Friend, we delivered ourselves over to professional guides, and the amount of remarkable things which we had allowed to escape our notice, owing to our reliance upon our friend's information, would have formed quite a valuable catalogue. "That's Saxon," he used to say, pointing to a plain archway, "and that's Norman," pointing to another uncommonly like the first. "That's pointed Gothic, and that the floriated Gothic, all different styles at different periods. Here!" he would continue, moving us on rapidly, so as to avoid giving us a minute to think over details, "is a lovely Rose Window; and

observe in those side-lights how the old glass has been preserved."

With this he has begun and finished any and every Cathedral. If he can get to some part of the building and decipher a Latin inscription before our arrival, he will tell us that "here was buried old Gozlan de Poing; we ought to find his tomb somewhere about with an effigy." Then he used to pretend to be searching for it. Presently he would announce, joyfully that his labours had been rewarded. "Here it is!" he would exclaim, pointing to a broken-nosed warrior, doing his best to seem at his ease in the most uncomfortable armour. "Here's Sir Gozlan. Look! He was three times at the Crusades, you see; that you know by his having his legs crossed three times," and so on.

"What," asked my Grandmother, "is the date of Norman architecture?—and is Gothic later?"

"Well," replied my Well-informed Friend, considering the matter, "the Norman was first, of course;" he evidently had his doubts on the subject, and was making another mental *Mem.*—to look it up directly he got home. "The Norman," he continued, "was first, and the Gothic improved on it."

"But," said my Grandmother, who is wonderful for her years, "if the Goths were such barbarians—as they *were*, or why should everyone with bad taste be called a Goth or a Vandal?—how is it they built such beautiful churches?"

"Ah!" replied my Well-informed Friend, with a sort of sigh, and a shrug that seemed to intimate how, at last, my worthy relative had formulated in so many words *the* difficulty of his lifetime. "Ah! that's it! How did the Egyp-

tians build the Pyramids? How did the Druids pile up Stonehenge? We don't know."

The list of things that my Well-informed Friend will have to "look up" when he "gets back among his books," must have amounted to a considerable number by the time he quitted us at Mont St. Michel, where, on seeing a pilgrimage, he observed, "History repeats itself;" but on being questioned by us as to the particular instance that came to his mind at that moment, he returned, "Why, don't you recollect, before the return of Louis the Eighteenth, or Charles the Tenth—or—let me see which was it came first?"

This was another item to be added to his list. Mont St. Michel is, as all the world knows from Stanfield's pictures (I think he painted it two or three times), a spot marvellously wild and romantic. The monastery, the fortress, and the houses have perched themselves on the rock, like the sea-birds on Puffin Island. The monastery belongs, I believe, to Friars Preachers; "Friars Perchers" would be a name more in accordance with the situation of their monastic nest. From Avranches, from Coutances, on the one side, from Dol, Dinan, Ponterson on the other, and, indeed, from every place in Normandy, or Brittany, lying within forty miles of Mont St. Michel, came omnibuses, calèches, waggons with springs, waggons without springs, diligences of a fashion that must have been out of date in eighteen thirty, carts covered, carts uncovered, in fact every sort of vehicle imaginable and unimaginable, drawn by animals of all shapes and sizes, on their first legs and on their last legs, crowded (the vehicles, I mean) inside and outside

with middle-class people, young, middle-aged, and old, cheerful and decorous, all bound for the pilgrimage, but with as little of the fanatic about them as there was of the rough English jollity which you would see in a party of Sussex yeomen with their wives and daughters, going in a van to Ringmer Races.

The Result of the tour was that we picked up some excellent dishes; and we decided, that, with coals and provisions at their present exorbitant prices in England, the wisest plan for all Englishmen, who could manage it, would be to go to Brittany, for the winter, and stop there. Here too is a wrinkle for Tourists *viâ* Channel Islands. *Avoid Guernsey on Sunday.* In fact, if you've seen Jersey, avoid Guernsey *in toto.* Sunday at Guernsey is a day of penitential discipline, when necessities become luxuries. London on Sunday is liveliness itself compared with Guernsey. So strictly is what *They* call "The Sabbath" kept, that the authorities of Guernsey will not allow the mails to land on that day, and they are, therefore, taken on to Jersey, while the visitor, anxiously looking for news from home, must impatiently wait till Monday, though the expected letter has arrived, and is actually lying in the Jersey post-office!

I complained to a Guernsey man, in his glossiest Sunday best. He pulled out his prayer-book, and referring to the Decalogue, insisted upon *its* authority for the Sabbath.

"Quite so," said I, "but The Sabbath or rest was on the Seventh Day, and Saturday is the Seventh Day. To be consistent, you must do as the Jews, and keep Satur-

day. This is Sunday, and the First day of the week. You can't find, anywhere, a command to turn number one into number seven. Get out."

He got out, and went to consult his minister. I trust some good may result from this interview. If so, I shall claim to be the Apostle of the Guernseymen.

But O for one month of French taste in this Holywell-Street-in-the-Sea sort of island! Why, instead of the measly, dingy place it is now, it would be the gem of the Ocean, bright with colours, flags, flowers, and uniforms; and its market, artistically decorated, might be a sight unequalled in Europe. At present, Golden Square, after a three days' soaking rain, is a more cheerful place than this dreary isle of Guernsey. Let any spirited proprietor, undertake the Dictatorship of Guernsey. Under an enlightened and energetic rule, Guernsey, as Italy is the Garden of Europe, might become the Tea-Garden of England. But any change must be for the better.

Is there no Society for the Propagation of Good Taste in Foreign Parts that would take up this subject?

At Southampton we felt ourselves once more on thoroughly British soil, and of course, at what is reckoned the best Hotel in the place, could only be regaled with "gravy soup, sole (fried or boiled), chops or a steak, Sir, yes, Sir;" and then the next morning we saw the truly British Bill. We had been gradually prepared for this, as the Hotels in Jersey and Guernsey are far from cheap, and the (except you choose a French one, which, out of France, is absurd) fare there is only choppy-and-steaky, after all.

At Southampton I saw, for the first time since our departure, the English papers. The world hadn't missed *me*, and I hadn't missed *it*.

I saw that all "The Amusements"—I beg pardon, Sir, I mean "The Theatres"—were reopening with new managements, new casts, old pieces, and old casts for new pieces; and as I regretfully changed the last sixpence remaining to me of my touring money, I said "England expects," etcetera. I must no longer represent Myself; but, Sir, I must remember that I have once more to address My Editor, to put myself *au courant* with what is going on and what is standing still; and again, Sir, sign myself now as formerly,

YOUR REPRESENTATIVE.

THE END.

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